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ECHOES

justice, peace and creation news

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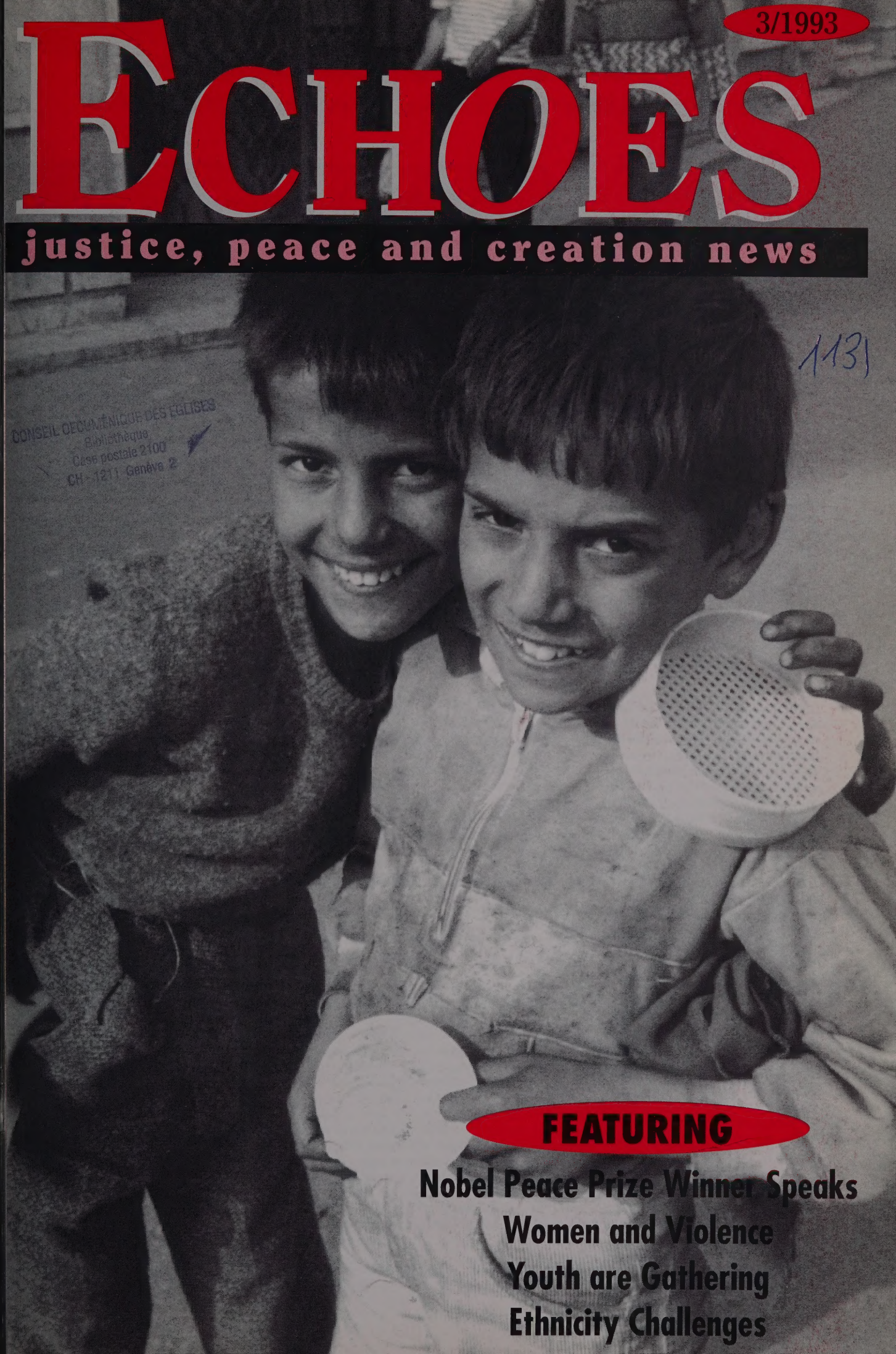


FEATURING

Nobel Peace Prize Winner Speaks
Women and Violence
Youth are Gathering
Ethnicity Challenges

Echoes From Elsewhere

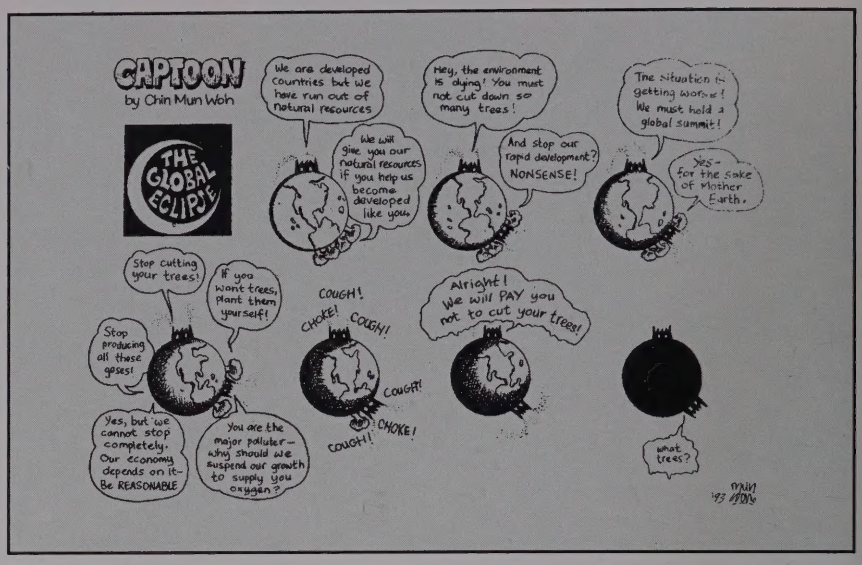
An Introduction To Echoes Magazine In Reactions, Facts and Issues From All Over The World

Rich Country, Poor People

Government technocrats have finally found the effective way to reduce poverty - by number-juggling. The solution it seems is as psychological as it is acrobatic.

Poverty is defined by a boundary called the poverty threshold. This is the lowest amount of pesos Filipinos need to survive daily. People earning below this amount (it was P13.36 in 1985) are considered impoverished. Just lower the poverty threshold -and voilà!- a few million people rise from poor to middle-class status .

Now last January, our government thinkers figured that Filipinos are a tough race so they argued we don't need much to survive. Hence, they looked back to 1985, found that P13.36 was too much money to sustain Juan and Maria's family, and figured that P10.26 would be enough. In this way, the number of poor folk in that year dropped by 9 million! A resounding victory for the government's war against poverty.


CARTOON
by Chin Mun Wah
THE GLOBAL ECLIPSE
We are developed countries but we have run out of natural resources
We will give you our natural resources if you help us become developed like you.
Hey, the environment is dying! You must not cut down so many trees!
And stop our rapid development? NONSENSE!
The situation is getting worse! We must hold a global summit!
Yes - for the sake of Mother Earth.
Stop cutting your trees!
If you want trees, plant them yourself!
Stop producing all these gases!
Yes, but we cannot stop completely. Our economy depends on it- Be REASONABLE
You are the major polluter - why should we suspend our growth to supply you oxygen?
COUGH!
CHOKE!
COUGH!
COUGH!
CHOKE!
COUGH!
Alright! We will PAY you not to cut your trees!
what trees?

Message from Poland

"The first issue of ECHOES just reached us and we read it with pleasure and interest. And as you state you are interested in comments and suggestions, I would like to stress that many people in this part of the world, in Central and Central-Eastern Europe, feel sometimes forgotten if not marginalised, in the big JPIC movement. This part of the world is going now, and in decades to come, through a very difficult transformation process, causing sharp deepening of human misery inherited from the past. The problem of JUSTICE is a problem of very old tradition here, as for a very long period, in some countries for centuries, the people have lived under foreign oppression and exploitation, which you can only compare with a colonial situation. And none of these countries have ever been engaged in the oppression and exploitation in what we call today the Third World. I fear that this misery, the actual dangers threatening the "Second World" and the parallelism, if not similarity, between the "Second" and the "Third World" are often overlooked in places which should be particularly sensitised to these problems. We are not the "rich North"; the opposite is true.

I think the feeling of competition between these two "worlds" that we sometimes observe, is not only dangerous and built on incomplete premises (besides North-South there still exists a deep social East-West conflict), but it is also contradictory to what we all really need and deserve: solidarity and cooperation. And the JPIC movement seems to me to be the proper place to seek such a rapprochement."

Jan Zaborowski, Foundation "Samaritanus" Warsaw, Poland, 13 November 1992.

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Echoes
justice, peace and creation news

Echoes is an occasional publication of the World Council of Churches' Programme Unit III on Justice, Peace and Creation. It is intended to share information and insights on the concerns of the former WCC sub-units, now in a restructured form in the WCC. This journal replaces: "Women in a changing world", "Youth", "CCPD: for a change", "Link", "Church and Society Newsletter" and "Forum".

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Editorial

In the time following Easter and Pentecost, we all are on the road to Emmaus, like the two disciples in the gospel story. We are trying to make sense about what has been happening in the world, and how this relates to our personal journey of faith.

As those two walked along, they confessed to the stranger who joined them that their hopes had been crushed. "We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel." Now they were confused, disappointed, and sad. And they were leaving Jerusalem, the site of the confrontation between the powerful authorities and Jesus, which had ended in his death.

The stranger went with them, and engaged them in dialogue. They discussed how to understand biblically the meaning of the historical events of that past week. As evening approached, the two offered hospitality to the stranger. And then, in the breaking of the bread, they suddenly saw that Christ was with them.

It was night. But immediately they rushed back to Jerusalem to find their community. And that community was gathered together, now filled with the resurrected hope in the redemption of all things. Christ came into their midst, and a few days later, the power of the Spirit filled the life and formed the mission of this new community.

Today, we also look at the events of history, and try to discern their meaning. Many of our hopes have been crushed. We had hoped that the end of the Cold War would bring peace, but instead witness new cycles of violence, often rooted in narrow nationalism and religion.

We had hoped that justice would come to those deprived of life's sustaining necessities. Yet, so many millions remain trapped in desperation and suffering.

We had hoped that global commitments would be made and honoured to preserve the earth's life-giving capacity for all and for the future. Yet, the atmosphere continues to warm, threatening to undermine the delicate balance of land and sea, placing millions in peril.

A decade ago, the World Council of Churches committed itself to the conciliar process of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation. But many churches, groups, and individuals who have taken up this challenge look to present events of history and often find that their hopes seem crushed.

One response is dialogue and reflection. In the World Council of Churches, and the work of its Unit on Justice, Peace, and Creation, this may take the form of consultations, reports, study papers, and other publications. Hopefully, those may help us in our reflection along the way.

The pages of this issue of Echoes offer a variety of such resources, sharing with you results of meetings, voices from different regions concerning their realities, and plans for forthcoming encounters. Hopefully, these may provide some insight and encouragement, stimulating your dialogue.

But finally, what we all most need at times when hopes feel crushed, are those moments when truth is revealed with a clarity that touches our hearts. Often that comes in the breaking of bread, in the sharing and worship of our communities of faith and discipleship.

When those two on the road realized that Christ was with them, everything changed. They reversed their journey, and rushed back to Jerusalem, to rejoin their community, ready to live and witness out of the hope grounded the power of the resurrection of Christ.

Finally, this is what the conciliar process for Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation is all about. While conferences, meetings, and papers have their role, this is not at the centre of the JPIC process. Rather, its goal is to inspire and create communities of faith, gathering around the breaking of bread, which live out the costly vision of the gift of life for all. In this search the church discovers it true identity, and on this journey, we may suddenly know, in moments of revelation, that Jesus is with us. And then, even in a hopeless evening, our hearts may burn again with hope, and all life takes a new direction.

Wesley Granberg-Michaelson

Marilia Schüller

Interview with Nobel Laureat
Rigoberta Menchu Tum

WCC talks with 1992 Nobel Peaceprize Winner

Rigoberta, in the speech you gave at the Ecumenical Centre on 18 February 1993 you said that the people of Guatemala did not really know what the Nobel Prize was, but they did know that it had to do with peace. Could you say a little more about that?

In Guatemala the people didn't know what a Nobel Prize was - whether it was a medal, or a diploma, or money. Now that is cleared up. What the people did know about is war, the internal armed conflict in the country, insecurity, disappearances, the people killed with impunity by the forces of repression, the displaced. They did know about the refugee part of it because of the fact that I am a refugee and they knew it had something to do with peace. And they perhaps understood it as hope for the future, for there is a general feeling against the army, against militarization and a great longing for the war to end so that life can begin anew, with new hopes and tranquility. For the middle classes it was the occasion to realize that Guatemala will never be able to make economic progress and benefit from the resources and wealth it possesses, and will never be successful at the political level unless the war ends. In other words, there were many things that the people could link to their own situation at home, but not so much with the Committee in Oslo where the decision was taken. The symbol of peace was what the people understood best - but as a symbol directly linked to their daily reality, and not the symbolic peace represented by a dove coming from the other side of the world. I believe this reconfirms once more how relative violence or non-violence is in a country where there is an internal armed conflict. War is violence and the situation the population is living in is also violence - especially for those victimized by the repression and impunity.

peter williams, wcc

In Guatemala the government and the army campaigned very strongly to try to stop me being chosen for the Nobel Peace Prize. The fact that an indigenous Indian woman was being discussed and talked about everywhere was a headache for the army and abhorrent to the government; an Indian woman, a "domestic servant", as they call it, and worse still, born poor and with no culture - because for those people culture means being able to read and write, nothing more.

So they couldn't possibly accept it, but the people in general, and especially the indigenous population, received it with great pride as a symbol of their hope, a pride that was more than just the expression of joy and emotion, a spirited pride, full of courage. This is what I meant when I said that it would be wrong for us to attribute the successes, the joys and all the rest to the Nobel Prizewinner alone, for all this expresses a desire for future, for life, it is a reaffirmation and demonstration of hope.

In your speech you said the people who win the Nobel Peace Prize should have a more active role. What do you mean by a more active role?

In the first place, it has to be understood that the Nobel Prizes have been given in different circumstances, for different kinds of contribution to peace and in relation to different experiences. I do not think experiences are ever the same. They may have many elements in common but each had its own context, its own profile, a place and a history which produced it. I am the product of a time which is not necessarily like the others. What is certain is that the people who have received the Nobel Peace Prize received it for something. They did something for peace in their region, or continent or in the world. And because of that we ought perhaps to raise the flag of peace, together. I think we can work together and become a lamp, a small light calling attention to different problems throughout the world. You know, when I received the Nobel Prize in Oslo last December in my official speech I called for Madam Daw San Suu Kyi to be released and expressed my solidarity with her. Not just because she is a woman and because she too received the Nobel Peace Prize but also because I believe that the solidarity and the voice of those who receive Nobel Prizes can be a focus for consensus on topics of supreme importance in the world. We need to introduce a collective role for those who receive the Peace Prize so that we can form a permanent network of cooperation. Then we can say to them, "Look, peace in Guatemala, peace in Yugoslavia needs a word from the 'Nobel Prizewinners'; or one of the people who received the prize is being deprived of her freedom, she needs the voice of the others." There has been no precedent for this. There have been "Nobel" committees convened by different agencies at different times but it has not been a permanent or regular practice. I think there are subjects that we should take up as the "Nobel prizewinners' agenda" on which we can act collectively, speak out regularly, perhaps make some suggestions or invite other groups to become involved in a particular problem. I think there are great prospects for this. I am not saying that it should be all the "Nobel prizewinners" but at least at the level of one region or in relation to subjects where we feel we can take an initiative. In the specific case of Guatemala I am very much looking forward to the reply I may receive from Oscar Arias Sánchez, Adolfo Perez Esquivel and one or two others to the suggestion that we could form ourselves into a permanent monitoring group for peace in Guatemala, peace in El Salvador, peace in Nicaragua so that situations of internal armed conflict do not recur again. These are three different countries in Central America but we could also extend our attention towards South America, for example, peace in Colombia, peace in Peru and in other parts of the continent. What can we do about the deep underlying causes of wars? How can we call attention to burning problems that have not so far caused wars but which could do so in future? The situation in regard to the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is an example: in many parts of the continent we are the majority, but we are treated with contempt by the minority. This could perhaps break out tomorrow into internal armed conflicts, open confrontations that would be a threat to peace. There are many tasks that the Nobel prizewinners could fulfil. I believe there is something which unites us and that is, the deep feeling for civil society and the need to contribute to reducing the military profile in the region and making the armed forces understand that they should not be the body that decides in civil society. I think it would be too much to say demilitarization but we might say the struggle for a civil society is one that should be taken up by the Nobel prizewinners.

To finish, Rigoberta, could you tell us what you hope to do in your role as Goodwill Ambassador during the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples?

There are two very concrete things. It is the first time in history that an indigenous person has received the Nobel prize. And into the bargain, a woman, self-educated and born into the most deprived society in the whole world, the indigenous society; someone who is also one of the victims of repression and impunity, one of those most directly affected by the war. It is important to note that this is the first time that an academic, university education - the privilege of the middle-classes - has been discounted in choosing the person who was to receive the prize. All this happened just at the time when an ambassador was needed for the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples. It is the first time a good-will ambassador has been appointed. I still do not exactly understand the meaning of "good-will", especially because I am a working person and I understand the sacred place of work in the lives of the poor. So, "good-will" does not mean that I have my own resources and so I can offer something of my life for others. In short, I still don't really understand it. However, for the first time, the Secretary General of the United Nations has appointed a person as good-will ambassador to represent him. I have had a few thoughts about this job for which there is no precedent. First, I think it has to be done

collectively. I believe in the collectivity and I believe in a common history. I do not believe that any one person can create memory alone. It is possible perhaps to do a few outstanding things alone, but it is the community that leaves the footprints for future generations and future years. That is why in the first place I think of appointing some distinguished spokespeople for the Indigenous Peoples, but not only for them, so that they reflect the plural nature of the century we live in. We are nearly at the end of the 20th century and identity is one of the strongest motives for struggle, that is to say, the understanding of identity, the right to identity and the right to plurality, mutual respect, exchange and unity. This means that all the different cultural expressions are not a problem because none of them is superior to the others. It is also a decisive decade in the struggle against racism and discrimination. And if we do not understand that, it too will be a source of conflict and social confrontation. So in such a complex world I think we need men and women to be spokespeople. I call them distinguished voices or distinguished spokespeople because I still haven't found the best name for them. But I intend to appoint ten or twelve distinguished people who will be able to speak regularly against racism and discrimination. They will also be able to plead for the highest values of our peoples, for the defence of peoples threatened with extermination and make a more realistic count of the indigenous peoples of the American continent. They can also link the cause of the indigenous peoples with that of the ethnic minorities in other parts of the world. How are the "Ainus" in Japan living, what is the situation in Tibet, or among other peoples of whom we know nothing but their names because there were never any links between the indigenous peoples and the ethnic minorities. They are the ones who have experienced racism and discrimination at first hand in human history. So what should we do so that together these distinguished voices can help to call indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities together for summit meetings? You will understand that I am not just planning a task for 1993 -we are looking at this task as a hope for the next millennium. The other day at the United Nations when I was thanking them for their good wishes to me in my capacity as ambassador for the International Year, I said "my hope is that this mandate as a Good-will Ambassador may leave some mark in history when in the year 2001 all our peoples meet together to evaluate a whole era of work." The situation of the indigenous peoples will not be solved in 1993, but this must be a significant year in setting some precedents. I see the role of ambassador of the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples and the Nobel Peace prize as a means of sowing the seeds of such precedents that will strengthen our peoples' struggle in the future.

There are many things that could be done, but that will depend on the support of our indigenous brother and sisters and the minorities themselves. It also depends on how we are going to develop unity: unity in our efforts, unity in our struggles, in our institutions, in our visions, unity with those fighting against racism, fighting for the environment, for integral development, for the cause of women, for the cause of minorities in all parts of the world, and with us who are fighting for the cause of the indigenous peoples and our plurality. The sum of all these efforts must be something that brings agreement and not division among us for I believe our role is always to call for agreement. If we agree, we will be strong in face of all the evils humanity is suffering today.

Rigoberta Menchu Tum was interviewed by Marilia Schüller of the Unit III staff

... all the different cultural expressions are not a problem because none of them is superior to the others ...

Entrevista de **Rigoberta Menchú**

por Marilia Schüller

Rigoberta, en su discurso dado en el Centro Ecuménico el 18 de febrero de 1993, afirmó que el pueblo de Guatemala no conocía muy bien lo que era el Premio Nobel pero que sabía lo que era la paz. ¿Podría hablar un poco más sobre ésto?

En Guatemala, la gente nunca supo lo que era un premio Nobel. Si era una medalla, si era un diploma o si era dinero. Ahora esta más claro. Lo que sí entendía la gente era la guerra, el conflicto armado interno en el país, la inseguridad, los desaparecidos, los muertos por la represión, los desplazados. Sí entendía, el contenido del refugio por el hecho de que yo era refugiada y tenía que ver con la paz. Y entendía quizás la esperanza del futuro, o sea, había un sentimiento generalizado contra el ejército, contra la militarización, y un gran sentimiento por que terminara la guerra y que iniciaran vidas nuevas, esperanzas nuevas, tranquilidad. También en los sectores de la clase media, era una ocasión para ellos de entender que Guatemala nunca iba a salir adelante a nivel económico, a pesar de los bienes y de las riquezas que posee, que no iba a ser un país exitoso a nivel político, si no terminaba la guerra. Es decir, habían muchas cosas que la gente podía vincular con su realidad interna pero no tanto con el comité en Oslo, donde se tomó la decisión. El símbolo de paz era lo que mas entendía la gente, símbolo muy vinculado a la realidad cotidiana y no una paz simbólica de palomita que viniera de cualquier lado del mundo. Yo creo que aquí es donde se reafirmaba una vez más que la violencia o no violencia es tan relativa en un país donde hay conflicto armado interno. La guerra, de hecho, es violencia y la situación que vive la población, especialmente los damnificados por la represión y la impunidad es también violencia.

En Guatemala, se hizo de parte del Gobierno y del ejército una campaña muy fuerte en contra de que yo fuera escogida para el Premio Nobel de la Paz. El hecho de que una indígena estaba siendo tan mentada y comentada en todos los círculos, para el ejército era un dolor de cabeza, para las autoridades del gobierno era repugnante; una indígena, como la llaman ellos "doméstica" y, peor aún, por haber nacido pobre, sin cultura, pues para estos sectores la cultura es saber leer y escribir nada más. Entonces era imposible para ellos aceptar, pero la gente en general, la población, principalmente indígena, también veía este símbolo como su orgullo más grande, su esperanza, un orgullo que iba mas allá de sólo la manifestación de alegría, de emoción, sino que se convertía en un orgullo combativo, tan vivo de valor. A eso me refería cuando dije que sería malo que los éxitos, las alegrías y lo demás lo atribuyéramos sólo al Premio Nobel, sino que es un deseo de futuro, de vida, de reafirmación, una manifestación de esperanza.

En su discurso dijo que las personas que recibieran Premios Nobel de la Paz deberían tener un papel más activo. Que entiende por un papel más activo?

En primer lugar, hay que entender que los Premios Nobel se han dado en diferentes circunstancias, en diferentes

peter williams, cmi

momentos de contribución a la historia de la paz, y desde diferentes experiencias. Pienso que las experiencias no se repiten, pueden tener muchos elementos comunes pero cada una tuvo un contexto, un perfil, un lugar donde nació, y una huella de la historia a quien deber. Yo debo a una época no necesariamente igual que los otros. Lo que sí es cierto es que las personas que recibieron los Premios Nobel de la Paz por algo fue. Algo hicieron por la paz a nivel regional, continental y mundial. Es sobre esta base que necesitamos quizás levantar la bandera de la paz, de manera común. Yo pienso que podemos trabajar juntas y convertirnos en una farola, en una pequeña luz que llame la atención sobre diversos problemas del mundo entero. Usted sabe que cuando yo recibí el Premio Nobel en diciembre pasado en Oslo en el discurso central yo pedí la libertad de la señora Daw Aung San Suu Kyi y manifesté la solidaridad con ella. No fue simplemente porque era mujer y porque también recibió el Premio Nobel de la Paz pero también porque creo que la solidaridad, la voz de los que reciben Premios Nobel, puede encauzar consenso en torno a temas transcendentales en el mundo. Es necesario iniciar un papel común de los que reciben el Premio Nobel, para que se constituyan en una red de cooperación permanente en la cual se pueda decir "Miren, la paz en Guatemala, la paz en Yugoslavia, necesita la palabra de 'los Premios Nobel', o una de las personas que recibió el Premio Nobel está privada de su libertad, necesita la voz de los demás". No ha habido precedentes en éso. Han habido juntas de los "Nobel" convocados por diferentes instancias en diferentes momentos, pero no es una práctica permanente y con continua. Pienso que hay temas que debemos asumir como agenda de "los Premios Nobel" sobre los cuales podemos juntarnos, pronunciar permanentemente, aportar quizás algunas sugerencias, quizás convocar a otros sectores para que se involucren en dicho problema. Creo que hay una gran perspectiva de ésto. No estoy diciendo que sean todos "los Premios Nobel", pero por lo menos a nivel de región, o a nivel de temas que identifiquemos para impulsar iniciativas. En el caso concreto de Guatemala, estoy muy esperanzada en la respuesta que pudiera recibir de Oscar Arias Sánchez, de Adolfo Pérez Esquivel y algunos otros, que pudiéramos constituirnos en una vigilancia permanente por la paz en Guatemala, la paz en El Salvador, la paz Nicaragüense para que no vuelvan a surgir situaciones de conflicto armado interno. Son tres países con su propia dimensión en Centro América pero también podríamos extendernos hacia América del Sur, por ejemplo, la paz en Colombia, la paz en Perú y en otras partes del continente. ¿De qué manera podemos contribuir nosotros en causas tan profundas que hacen surgir guerras? Como podríamos llamar la atención sobre problemas candentes que hasta la fecha no han implicado guerras pero que lo podrían en el futuro? La situación de los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas es un ejemplo: en muchas partes del continente somos mayoría y recibimos el desprecio de una minoría. Puede ser que mañana ésto se convierta en conflictos armados internos, en confrontaciones que amenacen la paz. Hay muchos papeles que pueden desempeñar "los Premios Nobel". Yo creo que hay algo que nos une, que es el espíritu tan profundo por una sociedad civil, contribuir a que baje el perfil del área militar en la región, hacer comprender que la fuerza armada no debe ser el ente decisivo en la sociedad civil. Creo que sería mucho decir la desmilitarizacion, pero si decir que la lucha por una sociedad civil en toda América debe ser una lucha de "los Premios Nobel".

Hay muchas iniciativas que podrían ser tomadas, pero esto dependerá del apoyo de los propios hermanos indígenas, de las propias minorías

Por último, Rigoberta, podría decirnos que pretende hacer en el ejercicio del papel de Embajadora de Buena Voluntad del Año Internacional de los Pueblos Indígenas?

Hay dos cosas muy concretas. Es la primera vez en la historia que una persona indígena recibe el premio Nobel. Además, mujer, autodidacta, que nació en la sociedad más desfavorecida en todo el mundo que es la sociedad indígena y que también es una de las victimas de la represión y de la impunidad, parte de los afectados más de cerca por la guerra. Es importante notar que es la primera vez que se deja a un lado quizás, la preparación académica, universitaria, el privilegio de la sociedad clase media, en la selección de la persona que recibiera el Premio Nobel. Todo esto ocurrió al mismo tiempo en que se necesitaba una Embajadora para el Año Internacional de los Pueblos Indígenas. Es la primera vez que se nombra una Embajadora de Buena Voluntad. Todavía no he entendido exactamente el significado de "buena voluntad", sobre todo porque soy una persona que trabajo y entiendo el sagrado lugar que ocupa el trabajo en la vida de los pobres. Así, la buena voluntad no significa que yo tengo mis propios recursos y

que entonces ofrezco algo de mi vida para los otros. En fin, yo todavía no lo entiendo. Sin embargo, por primera vez el Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas nombra a una persona como Embajadora de Buena Voluntad en su representación. Yo he pensado varias cosas sobre este papel que no tiene precedente. Primero, pienso que debe ser un trabajo colectivo. Creo en la colectividad y creo en la historia común. Creo que ninguna persona hace memoria sola. Sólo es posible hacer algunas cosas significativas, pero dejar huellas para las futuras generaciones y para futuros años, se hace en colectividad. Es por eso que en primer lugar, pienso nombrar unos voceros distinguidos de los Pueblos Indígenas, pero no sólo de los pueblos indígenas para que sean el reflejo de la pluralidad del siglo en que vivimos. Estamos a finales del Siglo XX, cuando la identidad es uno de los temas más fuertes de la lucha, es decir, comprensión de la identidad, el derecho a la identidad y el derecho a la pluralidad, al respeto mutuo, al intercambio y a la unidad. Es decir, que las diferentes expresiones culturales de nuestros pueblos no sean un problema, pues una no es superior a la otra. Es también una década determinante en la lucha contra el racismo y contra la discriminación. Y si no lo entendemos así, ésto será fuente de conflicto y de confrontación social. Entonces, dentro de un mundo tan complejo yo pienso que es necesario algunas voceras y voceros. Los llamo "voces distinguidas" o "voceros distinguidos", todavía no encuentro el nombre más adecuado, pero tengo la intención de nombrar unas diez o doce personas distinguidas que permanentemente puedan hablar contra el racismo, contra la discriminación, puedan también convocar por los valores más nobles de nuestros pueblos, por la defensa de pueblos que están en exterminio y hacer una cuantificación mucho más aproximada de los Pueblos Indígenas del continente Americano, que puedan también vincular la causa de los Pueblos Indígenas con las Minorías Étnicas en otras partes del mundo. ¿Como están viviendo los "Ainus" de Japón, cómo está la situación del Tíbet, o la situación de otros pueblos que no conocemos si quiera de nombre porque nunca hubo un lazo entre los Pueblos Indígenas y las Minorías Étnicas? Estos son los que han vivido en flor de piel el racismo y la discriminación en la historia humana. Entonces, cómo hacer para que estos voceros distinguidos puedan juntos ser convocadores de Cumbres de Pueblos Indígenas y de Minorías Étnicas. Usted comprenderá que estoy planteando una tarea no sólo para 1993, esta tarea la proyectamos como esperanza del próximo milenio. Cuando dije el otro día en la ONU que haría un voto por el futuro en mi calidad de embajadora del Año Internacional, dije "mi esperanza es que este mandato de Embajadora de Buena Voluntad pueda dejar alguna constancia histórica cuando en el año 2001 estemos reunidos todos los pueblos para evaluar todo una época de trabajo". La situación de los pueblos indígenas no va a tener solución en 1993, pero debe ser un año significativo para sembrar algunos precedentes. Entiendo el papel de Embajadora del Año Internacional de los Pueblos Indígenas y el Premio Nobel de la Paz como la manera de sembrar algunos de estos precedentes que fortalezcan la lucha de los pueblos en el futuro.

Hay muchas iniciativas que podrían ser tomadas, pero ésto dependerá del apoyo de los propios hermanos indígenas, de las propias minorías. Depende también de cómo vamos a trabajar la unidad: la unidad de esfuerzos, la unidad de luchas, la unidad de instituciones, la unidad de visiones y también de los que luchan por el medio ambiente, contra el racismo, por un desarrollo integral, por la causa de las mujeres, por la causa de minorías en todas partes del mundo y nosotros que luchamos por la causa indígena y la pluralidad de nuestros pueblos. La suma de todos estos esfuerzos debe ser algo que coincida y no que divida, entonces yo pienso que nuestro papel es siempre un llamado a que coincidamos. Si coincidimos, seremos fuertes frente a los males que padece la humanidad hoy.

"Mi esperanza es que este mandato de Embajadora de Buena Voluntad pueda dejar alguna constanza histórica cuando en el año 2001 estemos reunidos todos los pueblos para evaluar todo una época de trabajo"

The WCC has a new General Secretary

Konrad Raiser, professor of systematic theology and ecumenics in the Protestant theological faculty of the Ruhr University, Bochum, Germany was born 25 January 1938. He and his wife Elisabeth have four sons. An ordained minister in the Evangelical Church in Germany, Raiser studied theology in Tübingen, Bethel, Heidelberg and Zurich, and sociology and social psychology at Harvard University. He received the doctorate in theology from Tübingen in 1970.

From 1963-65 Raiser was a vicar of the Protestant Church of Württemberg, serving as an industrial pastor in Berlin and later in Stuttgart. Following studies in the US, he worked as an assistant for practical theology in the Protestant theological faculty in Tübingen from 1967-69. From there he went to Geneva, where he served for four years as study secretary of the WCC's Commission on Faith and Order. In 1973 he was named Deputy General Secretary of the WCC, including after 1979 responsibilities as staff moderator for the Programme Unit on Justice and Service. In October 1983 Raiser became professor at Bochum and director of the ecumenical institute of the theological faculty there.

He has written two books - *Identität und Sozialität* (1971) and *Ökumene im Übergang* (1989); English translation *Ecumenism in Transition*, WCC publications, 1991) - and is the editor of four others. He has written more than 200 articles in various journals on ecumenical and theological subjects. Since 1985 he has chaired the editorial committee of the German ecumenical journal Ökumenische Rundschau.

A member or several academic, church and ecumenical committees, including the presidium of the German Protestant Kirchentag, Raiser was WCC staff member responsible for the programme of the Fifth and Sixth Assemblies (1975 and 1983), an advisor at the ecumenical conference in Basel 1989 and Seoul 1990 and a delegate of the evangelical Church in Germany to the WCC's Seventh Assembly.

One World, October 1992

General Secretary reflects on Justice, Peace and Creation

Konrad Raiser, WCC's new General Secretary, had a first meeting with the staff of Unit III in January. It was a time of reflection on the past and future work on Justice. Peace, and Creation. The following is a summary of remarks he made concerning his vision for the work of the Unit.

Coming to Unit III on Justice, Peace and Creation is like coming home; I was personally associated with these concerns in my former work in the WCC, and they have remained close to my heart. JPC is the symbol, the advocate, of something that is central to the ecumenical vision. We can see more clearly now, perhaps, why the process may have gone off course; and we can reaffirm the vision and potential that is still there.

Unit III can be the most creative of the four Units in the new structure, in my view. And it must develop further the vision which has emerged from JPIC as conciliar process. This is the opportunity which is given to the Unit.

The world and the ecumenical situation have changed, and this provides a framework in which decisions about priorities and a new start for the Unit can be made. Let me give some examples of the shifts which have occurred, and their implications for our work.

Shifting emphases

"Development" is no longer a priority, in the terms in which we spoke of it in the 70's. The term can no longer rally people and enlist their support. While the former WCC programme on development (CCPD) had a history — we must now move on. The terms "solidarity" and "networking" may be slightly more appropriate, but they do not encompass all of the shift. The new focus is only now beginning to emerge.

We most now move out of the period when struggle and confrontation were the determining and defining ways of understanding our activity, for we have come to a period when upbuilding, reconstruction, and clear alternatives are the pressing needs; this is now central.

Further, the notion of struggle makes us captive to the definition of what we

struggle against, and we become captive to predetermined definitions. We must free ourselves from this captivity. This requires that we provide our own definition today of social and political realities.

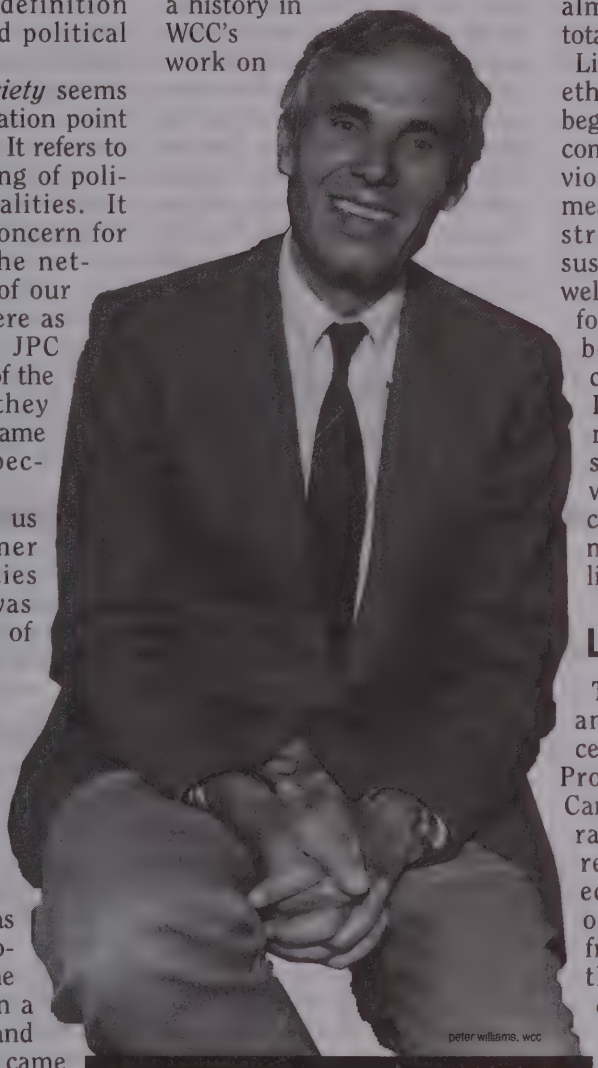
The term *civil society* seems to be one crystallization point for this new reality. It refers to a new understanding of political and social realities. It incorporates the concern for human rights. The networking approach of our past has a place here as well. When the JPC Commission spoke of the "culture of life", they were reflecting the same concern and perspective.

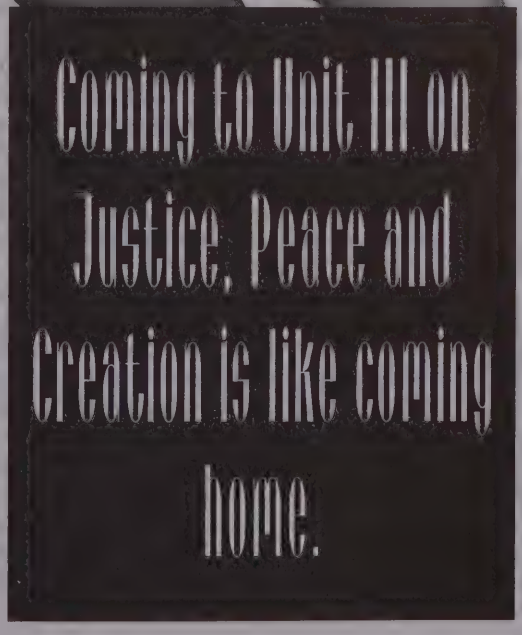
This *priority* takes us beyond our former individual identities sub-units. This was the "hidden focus" of the JPIC movement.

Political Ethics

The last 20 years witnessed enormous attention given to the economic condition of societies. This was necessary and appropriate. But when the WCC programme on a Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society came to articulate its goals at the Jamaica Central Committee meeting in 1979, it drew attention to the need for an understanding of political ethics as essential to promoting what would be needed for societies to be just, participatory, and sustainable. But this focus (including a study project which followed) was then lost.

We must take up this focus again, while not neglecting the economic statement given to the last Central Committee; that must be studied, and sharpened. But there must be a new focus on political ethics. This includes the issues of conflict resolution, and of good governance, both of which have a history in WCC's work on international affairs.





Further, we have a good and rich tradition of ecumenical social thought, going back to before World War II. But it is almost buried, and has been totally neglected.

Likewise, in dealing with the ethics of peace, we are sheer beginners. Yes, we say we are committed to a culture of nonviolence. But what does this mean? What are the political structures essential to sustainable societies? Here as well the matter of sovereignty for indigenous peoples must be addressed in the new context of political ethics. Likewise, the issues of nationalism, ethnicity, and self-determination, around which there is enormous confusion in the world today, must be taken up in this light.

Life-centred Approach

Third is the shift from anthropocentrism to life-centrism, to use the words of Professor Chung's speech at Canberra. Here the work on racism, women, and the reflection on theology and ecology must be related to one another in a new framework, making possible the discovery of new concerns. This relationship was evident in the work of Section I at the Canberra Assembly, and even more so in the Kuala Lumpur Report**. It is reflected in the work done in preparation of the United Nations Conference on Ecology and Development (UNCED), now behind us. All this forms another new framework, and we must determine how to go forward with this in mind.

Overall, we need to determine a few limited *foci* for programmatic efforts. And then we need to think of the "infrastructure" for the Unit — the networks, the giving of advice, and

solidarity actions. Making this distinction between programme foci and infrastructure seems quite important.

This means bringing the networks together in one transparent relationship, rather than working with the particular networks of the past.

Peace/Conflict Resolutions

Often enemies are constructed because they are "needed"; and this then becomes self-perpetuating. Enemy images become a way of reinforcing conflicts. When we consider the situation on a local or personal level, it becomes clear that these enemy images are less meaningful.

Regarding more generally the approach to conflict situations, when we breakdown these concerns to a regional context and perspective, the tasks become perhaps more difficult initially, but also more creative.

In this work we must recover perspectives concerning the creative function of law in today's situation. Could we not gather a group of experts in the use of international law to determine what is possible and required, in the midst of the global situation?

International Affairs

The WCC's work in international affairs is not primarily technical, diplomatic work, but substantive and programmatic. There was a time when work in international affairs was seen as primarily diplomatic contacts, but the focus of our work shifted, and it is now expressed through programmatic lines such as peace, governance, human rights, etc. For this reason it is appropriate for the work of international affairs to be part of this Unit. ✐

* *"Giver of Life - Sustain your Creation", report of the Pre-Assembly Consultaton on Sub-Theme I, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, May 1990.*

Justice for the comfort women

Every Wednesday, angry Korean women demonstrate outside of the Japanese embassy in Seoul, demanding justice and repentance for the thousands of Asian woman forced into military sexual slavery by the Japanese army during World War II. Many of the survivors of the estimated 80,000 women, mainly Koreans, but also Chinese, Filipina, Indonesian, Taiwanese, Burmese and Dutch women, have come forward after almost 50 years of shame and silence to denounce this violation of human rights. The Japanese government continues to deny its legal responsibility for these crimes and claims that the women volunteered their services. Some of the documents which substantiate the personal testimonies of survivors have been found in the United States, and it is believed that more corroborative material will come to light in the months ahead.

The Korean Council for Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery in Japan, which groups together some 20 Korean NGOs, including the Asian Women's Human Rights Committee, Gabriella, and the Human Rights Committee of the National Council of Churches in Korea, has organized the protest movement, which began in January 1992. Prominent citizens from the political and artistic world have joined the movement, one of whose immediate aims is to raise enough money to support the ageing and ailing survivors. The Korean government has also pledged financial support for the former "comfort women". To date, some 450 survivors of the Japanese aggression have made themselves known to the government and the Council, of whom 211 were conscripted by the military into sexual slavery

The Korean Council for Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery in Japan has raised serious questions concerning the moral ability of Japan to play a positive role in intergovernmental fora unless it solves the grave issues surrounding sexual slavery and other violations of human rights committed during World War II.

The group plans to continue the Wednesday demonstrations until the government accedes to the following demands:

- Acknowledge the crime of sexual slavery
- Reveal the whole contents of the crime of sexual slavery
- Apologize formally for the crime of sexual slavery

° Erect a memorial tablet for the victims of sexual slavery
° Pay reparations to the victims and their bereaved families
° Record the crime of sexual slavery in school textbooks and teach the students about it so that it does not recur
° Punish the criminals

Ms Heisoo Shin, chairperson of the International Relations Committee of the Council, was WCC's spokesperson on the issue during the February 1993 session of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva. She stressed that demonstrations in Korea and the Philippines will continue, and she announced the world-wide demonstrations planned for March 1 to protest the refusal of the Japanese government to acknowledge its responsibility in the matter. The Sub-Commission to the Commission on Human Rights had earlier drafted decisions for action on this case, calling for "the right to restitution, compensation and rehabilitation for victims of gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms." She compared the actions of the Japanese army to the mass rapes which have taken place in the war in ex-Yugoslavia and to the sex tourism industry of many Asian countries, calling them present-day manifestations of sexual slavery.

A Dutch survivor, who as a young woman was captured by the Japanese army in what was then the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), gave moving testimony of her suffering during a briefing session at the United Nations in Geneva. She later said the courage of the Korean women who had come forward to denounce these crimes prompted her to do the same. "Even after 50 years", she said, "I have the right not to forgive all those who caused this pain."

Ex-Yugoslavia: Women and Violence

Abuses of human rights, violation of the Geneva Conventions, a kind of death — these were the expressions used by women reacting to reports of systematic rape taking place in former Yugoslavia, where war has been raging unabated since early 1992. Women's groups in many countries sent anguished inquiries to the WCC, calling for condemnation of these acts and requesting concrete measures to help the victims.

Massive appeals from women's groups were also addressed to the European Parliament, Amnesty International,(both of whom sent investigative missions to ex-Yugoslavia) and numerous international women's organizations. The extent of this particularly abhorrent violation of human rights was a subject of speculation, with all parties to the conflict either denying knowledge of such deeds or imputing them wholly to the others.

International agencies providing humanitarian aid to the victims of the war were justifiably cautious about substantiating the charges of mass rape, concerned as they were with providing basic necessities to the suffering civilian population in the war zone. But reports of systematic rape increased, and women's stories began to take on an eerie similarity ("When the village was overrun, all the women and girls were separated from the males, and taken to a "detention centre" where they were held for periods ranging from several hours to several months. Some of them never returned.") Testimony given by survivors indeed confirmed that some women were held by members of the Serbian militia until they reached advanced stages of pregnancy. Thus would they suffer double and triple humiliation: rape, a child who is born as the result of rape, and possible exclusion from a family or community unable to bear the social and cultural stigma of the act.

WCC response

As part of WCC's response to the situation of the women, WCC's General Secretary Emilio Castro issued a statement condemning the "war crimes against women" and called for "an immediate halt to these atrocities, freedom under conditions of security for these women and provision of humanitarian and medical aid to alleviate their suffering". In December 1992 three WCC staff members took part in an *Ecumenical Women's Team Visit* to Zagreb to meet with women's groups and refugees from the war zone and to find ways to provide concrete help for the survivors. Another team visited Belgrade for discussions with women's groups and church authorities. They too heard reports that rapes was taking place on all sides, but that the majority of victims were Muslim women.

A Sensitive Issue

In discussions with various women's groups working with refugees in Zagreb, the Team learned about the difficulty of

obtaining testimony about the rapes from survivors. The taboo which surrounds rape in all cultures, and the personal trauma experienced by the woman, often prevent them from discussing the subject. The possibility of endangering family members still in the war zone is an added hindrance.

Violence against women not limited to violent conflicts

Many of governments and NGOs who made interventions during the recent hearings of the UN Commission on Human rights noted the widespread and growing phenomenon of violence against women. Ms Johanna Dohnal, Austrian Federal Minister for Women's Affairs cited reports from former Yugoslavia which describe instances of women having been raped by their formerly friendly neighbors. "At first sight," she said, "such reports may be incomprehensible. Yet... they are not unexpected. We know from numerous studies on violence against women that they are sexually harassed not mainly by unknown men but by men in their closest and most familiar social environment... It is the underlying structural violence against women which makes men resort to this strategy in times of war. We therefore have to intensify our efforts to outlaw violence against women in general."

Ms Dohnal cited the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights scheduled for June 1993 in Vienna and noted that she intends to present concrete proposals to ensure that the protection of the rights of women be made a priority of the Conference.

According to some specialists who work with trauma victims, such people are often able to cope only by burying the memory of the experience. Indeed, treatment centres which target this group have not been used to any significant extent by the survivors. The *special rapporteur* and the team of doctors who investigated this aspect of the war for the UN Commission on Human Rights reported that "establishing health services that are designed specifically for rape victims will lead to further stigmatization. Therefore, programmes should be created for all women and children who have been traumatized by war." (See: United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Situation of Human Rights in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia", E/CN4/1993/50, 10 February 1993.)

The rapes and other human rights violations were used by all parties to the conflict as propaganda, especially in Serbia and Croatia. "The suffering of the women is never a concern," wrote one team member. "None of the pronouncements known to the women with whom we spoke referred to the defense of women or to re-establishing the lost dignity and integrity of the women who had been raped. They are not considered heroes like the men who die in battle, neither are those few women who have become combatants. In cases where their suffering is not used as an instrument of war propaganda, they are referred to as "those poor women", worthy of pity, but whose injury or death does not lead to prosecution of the perpetrator.

Children, of course, are among the most vulnerable victims of the war. The UN report states that "children continue to be exposed to war trauma directly, as well as through the media and through listening to parents' and other adults' graphic discussions of traumatic events, including rape, in their presence." At this writing the war continues and intensifies, and there is no evidence that rape, torture and execution of civilians has diminished.

The Role of the Media

The role of the media in uncovering the crime of mass rape in ex-Yugoslavia was paramount. The other side of the coin was that some of the victims underwent a second victimization, recounting their experiences repeatedly, without adequate psychological and social support. Televised pictures of the grieving and traumatized women first shocked and then threatened to inure millions of spectators to the horror of the war. But extensive media coverage on the rapes also accounted for the quick and sometimes awkward response of groups seeking to provide help. Women's groups in ex-Yugoslavia advised potential aid-givers to work in conjunction with local initiatives so as to assure that the aid reached the women who needed it. The Team was told by care-givers in Zagreb that measures were being taken to shield the women from access by the media.

In elaborating recommendations for practical support for the victims, the Team recognized the enormous difficulties — material and psychological — confronting those already providing care. Most of the refugees are in Croatia where they are being cared for in private homes. A smaller number are in refugee camps run by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees in and around Zagreb. The economic hardship resulting from the 1991 war and uneasy truce between Croatia and ex-Yugoslavia is making itself increasingly felt, and the refugees are becoming a heavy burden for the rest of the population. The Team urged churches and ecumenical agencies to advocate for international acknowledgement of responsibilities to the refugees.

An Issue Worldwide

The issue of women raped in war has probably never before been the focus of so much international attention. The team noted, "with horror, the acceptance of this reality as commonplace and the dismissive attitude that is frequently exhibited by authorities and communities."

According to the Team, "the use of rape as a weapon of war is perceived as having its roots in patriarchal systems. Destruction and violation of women can be one way of attacking male opponents who regard the women as 'theirs', and whose male identity is therefore bound up with protection of 'their' women."

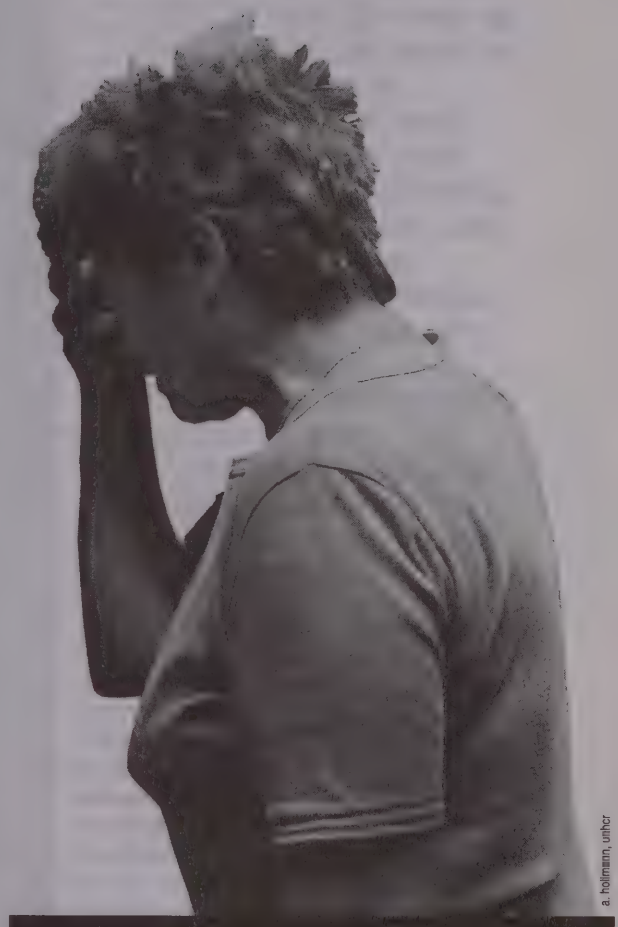
Countless women have suffered rape during the conflicts in Guatemala, Liberia, Angola, Mozambique, Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan, lending credence to the theory. Little note of these atrocities has been taken by the media and the international community as a whole. In its report, "Rape of Women in War", the Ecumenical Team urged the churches and the international community to develop a greater understanding of the use of rape as a weapon of war, and to insist upon documentation and analysis of such planned violations of human rights and their root causes.

Solidarity

In a statement to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights last February, the WCC cited the report of the Ecumenical Women's Team and noted that "Women and children are among those who pay the highest price in situations of war. But neither women or children have any voice in the decisions taken to wage hostilities nor in the negotiations to bring about a just peace." It continued: "The Team believes the international community must be challenged to respond firmly to [the situation of] women raped in military conflicts, not only in former Yugoslavia, but anywhere in the world where war is being waged. The extent and frequency of the violation of women in war must not be allowed to deaden sensitivity to this practice as constituting a gross violation of human rights." The statement called on the United Nations to strengthen international instruments to ensure condemnation of rape as a war crime, and to enforce the accountability of authorities and individuals who commit such crimes.

Finally, the WCC called on the UN to set in place the mechanisms necessary to address the question of violence against women. At present, violations specifically directed against women are not comprehensively addressed within the UN human rights system, neither by the Commission on Human Rights nor by the Vienna-based Commission on the Status of Women. Emphasis should be put on the need for existing thematic mechanisms to monitor, systematically record and take action on cases of violence against women. Such evidence should also be made available to a permanent international tribunal.

Following the visit, WCC appealed to the international community to support an international solidarity fund to enable concrete, flexible and sensitive means of responding and providing advocacy for needs, as defined by local women in many differing situations and contexts. The fund is to be administered jointly by the WCC Women's Team and the Programme Unit on Sharing and Service. The Women's Team has also called on all those who want to engage in a symbolic act of solidarity to follow the example of the "The Women in Black", a group in Belgrade which, clad in black, began to hold weekly silent vigils in the streets to protest the war. Finally, women's groups are looking to find ways to strengthen the peace movements which are present in all the countries of ex-Yugoslavia.



a. holmann, unhcr

Destruction and violation of women can be one way of attacking male opponents who regard the women as 'theirs', and whose male identity is therefore bound up with protection of 'their' women."

Comment puis-je parler à une amie de Sarajevo? Le seul fait que j'aie l'électricité et de quoi me nourrir, crée un fossé qu'il est parfois insupportable de franchir. Que dois-je faire? Est-ce que des activités en faveur de la paix peuvent faire taire mon sentiment de culpabilité? Est-ce que ma présence dans des manifestations d'opposition à Milosevic - manifestations chauvinistes et menées par des hommes - diminue mon sentiment d'impuissance?

Si je lui dis que je pense à elle et que mes rêves sont hantés par la peur, cela l'aidera-t-elle? Si je lui dis que nous sommes là, en noir, au coin de la rue chaque semaine et que les gens nous crachent au visage en nous traitant de traîtres à la nation serbe (...), si je dis tout ça, me répondra-t-elle que je suis sotte et qu'elle, elle risque sa vie à chaque instant? Si je publie un article dans lequel je condamne ceux de tous bords qui massacrent et violent, et dans lequel je parle surtout de sa souffrance à elle, est-ce que cela l'aidera?

Et si je lui dis que nous sommes allées en Italie, en France, en Allemagne, et que les femmes du monde entier lui manifestent leur soutien, va-t-elle seulement ciller? Si ses fenêtres sont cassées, si un litre d'eau coûte 20 Marks, si ses cheveux ont blanchis et que ses joues se sont creusées (...)

Les Femmes en noir sont un tout petit groupe de femmes qui assurent une présence dans les rues de Belgrade depuis le début de la guerre. Même si elles sont peu nombreuses, l'important est qu'elles maintiennent une certaine pression en témoignant symboliquement de la condition des femmes dans la guerre: réfugiées, femmes qui secourent des réfugiées, mères et soeurs en deuil, femmes violées et contraintes à la prostitution. Dans leurs appels, elles dénoncent l'origine patriarcale du nationalisme et de la guerre.

L'action des Femmes en noir est répercutée en Italie, en Allemagne, en Belgique et en Grande-Bretagne. Dans leurs rencontres internationales, elles ouvrent la voie vers une nouvelles prise de conscience sur des questions comme: "femmes et patrie", "identité nationale et identité des sexes", "femmes et embargo".

Ces lignes sont tirées d'un témoignage dans lequel deux Femmes en noir de Belgrade parlent de la profonde remise en question à laquelle les féministes de Serbie tentent de faire face: "Division, Culpabilité, Crise d'identité", est le titre de leur article. Une féministe peut-elle être une nationaliste chauviniste? Une pacifiste peut-elle être une nationaliste?

Les groupes féministes devraient-ils prendre position face au nationalisme (et à la guerre) sous peine de perdre des adhérentes?

A part les "Femmes en noir" et le "Lobby des femmes", qui sont clairement non-nationalistes, tous les groupes de féministes sont en difficulté. La question du nationalisme divise les femmes au sein des groupes comme elle engendre des conflits dans les familles et sur les lieux de travail.

Certaines femmes ne peuvent s'identifier à la "nation Serbe". A la chute du communisme elles ont perdu les droits pour lesquels elles avaient lutté dans le mouvement féministe yougoslave d'après-guerre (égalité sociale, droit à l'avortement, éducation gratuite, par ex.). Elles ne sont plus yougoslaves, pas encore serbes.

Aider les femmes à trouver leur identité de femme, c'est le long travail qu'il faut entreprendre.

Nous savons que, alors que les hommes sont appelés à mourir héroïquement pour la patrie, le courage des femmes violées et tuées ne sera jamais reconnu, sauf par nous; nous savons que, si nous disons haut et fort qui nous sommes et ce que nous voulons, notre expérience et nos paroles n'entreront dans aucun des modèles politiques reconnus par l'Histoire.

Et pourtant nous sommes là...

Extrait et résumé du témoignage de Lepa Mladjenovic & Vera Litricin. Transcrit part Tanya Renne, Belgrade, octobre 1992. Publié dans La Lettre, par Femmes pour la Paix, Genève, Lausanne, mars 1993, No. 3.

International Women's Day, March 8th, was dedicated this year to the question of women in conflict situations by NGO women's groups in Geneva. Conferences and seminars were held throughout the day at the UN headquarters.

Representatives from Somalia and South Africa, women refugees and victims of violence, including traditional practices harmful to women, spoke about the experiences of these groups.

In preparation of the observance, Swiss women began a march from the capital, Bern, on March 1st, to the UN headquarters in Geneva where they delivered a petition and 5,000 signatures protesting the violence against women and children in the war in ex-Yugoslavia. The petition called for the appointment of a woman to investigate rape in war situations and for the establishment of an international war crimes tribunal.

Joining the march were women from Rwanda, who called attention to the situation of women in their country where a violent rebellion has been raging since 1990. Women in the war zone have suffered all the atrocities of war, including execution, rape and loss of homes and families.

Swiss women are otherwise demonstrating their solidarity with the victims in ex-Yugoslavia by participating in a silent vigil on the first and third Thursdays of every month, organized by Femmes en noir, (Women in Black). Similar vigils are taking place in cities in Austria, Germany and other countries in Europe. Other groups have organized the collection of aid packages for refugee families in Zagreb.

A Budding Struggle

Young Women Meet in Geneva

Eight beautiful young women representing Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America and Pacific came together November 23-29, 1992, in dark and rainy Geneva in Switzerland. They came to join the continuing struggle of women throughout the world and to present their own real stories of struggle as young women. It was a time of intense sharing, a time of binding solidarity, and a time of deep commitment for future planning to ameliorate the situation of women and to respond in action to the crying voices of women today.

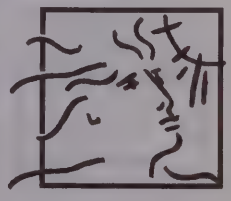
This Young Women's Planning Meeting was initiated during the Consultation of Ecumenical Youth Networks and Movements of the World Council of Churches in May 1992. There was a call to begin an inter-regional process of collaboration on young women's networking within the World Youth Projects programme. The call is now being followed up jointly by the Youth and Women's Teams of the Programme Unit on Justice, Peace and Creation in the framework of the World Youth Projects Inter-Regional Programme and the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women.

Although the gathering began as a response to this call, it surpassed the definition of a "planning meeting", and became a local and global commitment. Participants returned home overwhelmed with stories from around the world which echoed their own experiences. The names may have been different, but unjust practices towards young women seem to be the same in all regions.

The worship services that were led daily by different regions, lifted up the needs and struggles of young women. There were written reports from the regions which mirrored common concerns. The presentations helped to draw a complete picture about the struggles of young women today.

The regional presentations were preceded by inputs about the nature of work done by the Youth and Women's Teams of the WCC. Aruna Gnanadason, Coordinator of the Women's Team, presented a brief history of women's role in the ecumenical movement. Her presentation showed how the issues of women evolved with time, while the continuum of women's struggles remained clearly evident.

A similar presentation about the Youth work in the WCC was given by Executive Secretary Peter Brock. He talked about the different areas of work and various programmes carried out by the Youth Team. A special presentation on EGGYS - the Ecumenical Global Gathering of Youth and



1

Students - was made by the Organizing Secretary Mr. Manuel Quintero. Marilia Schüller from the Programme to Combat Racism shared her perspectives of the Women Under Racism programme. The need to begin a process with young women in order to create more awareness among them on the one side, and to respond to their needs and struggles on the other, was emphasized by all.

After assessing the many issues and concerns of young women, some general concerns were identified for study by small working groups. Three broad issues were voiced by all regions: violence against women, women's participation in church and society and women and questions of eco-justice. Each group defined and clarified the issues and developed strategies that could be followed in order to enhance the work among young women. Practical steps and activities were proposed.

2

Following the reports from groups a decision was taken to hold a global festival of young women in October 1994. The theme of the Festival is to be "I Am Worthy - Young Women Demand A Violence-Free World" reflecting on the worth that God has given to creation and the obligation of human beings to respect that creation. Thus any act that restrains God's will for creation is to be named violence. Accordingly, any act against women that hinders God's intention for women is violence. The Festival will help young women to raise their voices against violence and address the practices of violence against women which have become commonplace in many societies.

During the time in Geneva the group visited headquarters of non-governmental organizations working with women, namely Isis-Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and World Young Women's Christian Association. This was an excellent opportunity to be in direct contact with the dynamic work done among women in different contexts.

Following is an assessment of the meeting by a participant from Latin America: "We met amongst the women of the world. This has produced in us a hope and has given us strength to continue women's struggle. We reaffirmed that women's problems are the same, although in different cultures they have different characteristics. Everywhere we carry the same discrimination and marginalization. That is why meetings like this help us to identify criteria to support each other, to get to know each other better and to join together in solidarity. This meeting was very important for young women because for the first time we were the heroines! The challenge from WCC to the churches, ecumenical organizations and popular groups is very important in order to deal with racism, sexism, classism and discriminatory practices particularly against women and begin really liberating processes."

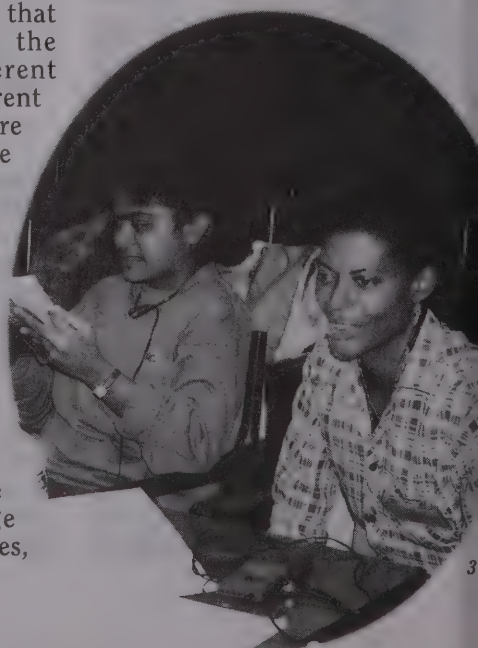
The November 1992 meeting articulated a vision and a commitment for the future work with younger women. It was a budding effort which hold promise for the future.

Najla Abou-Sawan
Director of Christian Education
The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon

PHOTOS (by Anu Talvivaara)
1. Marthe Dansokho, Senegal, and Bienvenida Mendoza, Dominican Republic, listening to the burning issues of young women.

2. From left: Silvia Rostagno, Italy, Necta Rocas, Philippines and Najla Abou-Sawan, Lebanon, during the visit to the World YWCA.

3. Young women from the islands - Setaita Tamanikaiyaroi, Fiji and Genevieve McDaniel, Jamaica.



3

Ecumenical Global Gathering of Youth and Students

EGGYS

The incarnation of the Christian faith in the midst of suffering and struggle lies at the very heart of our work as ecumenical youth and student movements. The challenge of deepened ecumenical cooperation and the search for new and creative ways of revitalizing ecumenical youth and student ministry are but vehicles to fulfilling our vision of a just,peaceful and sustainable world. The formation of working groups (WG) which will focus on themes and issues has been affirmed as a major component of the EGGYS process, and an important means in providing the content and the basis of ecumenical cooperation.

- WGs are means to affirm and realize the goals which have been set for the process and EGGYS;
- WGs are means to contextualize and enrich the process of ecumenical cooperation by focusing on themes and issues as they are lived and experienced by young people at the grassroots;
- WGs are means to discern the role of youth and students in the transformation of church and society;
- WGs are means to incarnate our faith in a context of suffering, struggle and hope;
- WGs are means to concretely show the ability and willingness of the partner organizations to work ecumenically on issues of concern for youth and students.

Tasks of the Workinggroups

- To produce a "provocation" that will be widely distributed to elicit analysis, critiques and responses from the different constituencies.
- To compile and produce background papers and audio-visual material for the gathering;
- To prepare resource materials for use at regional gatherings and other meetings;
- To resource a forum during the gathering;
- To facilitate participation of delegates in the gathering;
- To facilitate the sharing of resources on the WG issue among the different partners and supporting organizations;
- To raise the consciousness of constituencies of the partner organizations;
- To facilitate networking by coordinating regional and inter-regional gatherings on the WG issues;

The Seven Themes

- Bible Study and Liturgy
- Unity in a fragmented world
- Women's Issues
- Economics, Society and Alternative Models
- Education for Life - creative models of education.
- Rights of People and Democracy.
- Environment and Development

In November, 1991, the Working Group on Bible Study and Liturgy met in Geneva, and developed the methodology and liturgical material printed in Portuguese, Spanish and English. Also in November 1991, a core of the Working group on Women met in Jamaica, taking advantage of the pre-existing processes of cooperation between three of the partners. It established the methodological framework for the later meeting of this working group.

Representatives of the EGGYS partners joined the WCC-initiated Conference on environment and development in concert with the United Nations Conference on Environment and development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in June, as preparation for their involvement in the working group on this theme.

Meetings of other working groups were delayed until finances were secured.

During 1992 the following working group meetings took place -

- October, in Manila, Philippines - Economics, Society and Alternative Models; and Environment and Development
- November in New Delhi, India, the Working Group on Women's Issues.

The Working Group on Rights of People and Democracy met in Geneva in February; on Unity in a Fragmented World in Denmark in February, and in Germany in April.

The Education for Life theme was handled by the Brazilian National Committee.

The Workinggroup on Environment

The Working group affirmed that the gift of abundant life (John 10:10) was the purpose of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and must stand as our vision as we nurture the creation. But, " . . the whole earth is threatened . . . ecological and human trends make it difficult to imagine a future at all". Roots of this crisis are human beings living out values of individualism, possessiveness and ownership, domination and exploitation, within a system that promotes competition and "growth" :

"The false gods we worship lead us into actions that are ecologically and humanly disastrous. They destroy cultures, increase poverty and extinguish thousands of living species. How can we agree with an idea of progress which claims to produce happiness for all but in fact is against life itself?"

The Working Group called on youth and students to seek "conversion" and to educate themselves and ACT :

"Our own education can be a choice for life . . (and) participation in collective actions towards ecological and social justice is an empowering act : people's movements, especially the work of youth and students help to redistribute power and lead to more equitable distribution of resources and more inclusive decision-making".

"Our individual actions are crucial, but we can magnify their importance by joining with others in common goals and participation in processes already underway. Talk with your friends and family about their concerns and see what joint action you can initiate. Link with others in the ecumenical movement, such as EGGYS, to assist our communities to understand the difference between liberation and existing models of development. To be more effective, try to get in touch with other youth movements in other countries to share experience and strategies. Link with ecological groups and join with other groups to boycott companies whose products and policies harm environment and perpetuate injustice. Initiate and support campaigns to convert military spending to social and environmental programs. And challenge your church to reflect on being part of the consumer culture and its responsibility for changing it".

"Participation in collective actions towards ecological and social justice is an empowering act; people's movements, especially the work of youth and students, help to redistribute power and lead to more equitable distribution of resources and more inclusive decision-making. We can volunteer time and energy to work with community councils and grassroots organisations which are creating alternative local structures, such as locally-run cooperative banks or alternative trading networks, to acquire control over the community's natural resources. We can support many local groups which are working to empower people most affected by poverty, such as women and children, landless farmers and homeless. And we can push for new curricula about ecology in the schools and colleges".

The Working Group on Economics, Society and Alternative Models

"We live in an unprecedented situation. The classical ways of understanding history, its epochs and cycles, are no longer capable of describing the events . . at the turn of the 21st century, we as youth and students from all corners of the world, face fear and uncertainty. Committed as we are to justice and equity, and to pulling down of all walls of separation, we dream of new possibilities of working together in search of a society which is life-affirming and in which everyone has a role and value".

The Working Group sought to analyze this unprecedented situation, seeking both insight into the realities of today, and hope for the future. The "sins" of modern society - inequality and poverty, causing violence and criminality, social evils (drug abuse, exploitation of women and children, selfishness and victimisation), and ignorance - feed a systematic and global inequality. A global culture, including especially a "youth culture" aids and entrenches this inequality. Human beings are stripped of the dignity they are endowed with by the Creator.

Young people are divided amongst themselves by a competitive society, while passivity and apathy characterise the former socialist countries. The majority of today's youth - those living in "developing countries" - are denied their right to grow to the fullest of their youthfulness unemployment afflicts them, driving many to turn their back on their identity, their community and their nation in search of "greener (Western) pastures".

The Working Group sought a vision for the future rooted in the Incarnation and teachings of Jesus Christ.

We envision an Economy and Society

... where ownership of resources, participation in work and sharing of resources is life enhancing

...that is not based on the accumulation of money, profit and power that divide people and nations

... that give importance to non-monetary values of life

... that considers collective and individual values and initiatives

... that is based on satisfying concrete and specific needs of people and nations

... that is based on the balance between basic needs of the majority and the protection, conservation and preservation of natural resources

...that is based on equal and harmonious partnership between men and women.

We need to BUILD UP viable alternatives which can be implemented although through hardships, and which can last and can contain the seeds of a new society".

Such a society can only be built with "the active and democratic participation of all its members".

"The need to construct fresh alternatives, to dream dreams and formulate new visions is part of our historical responsibility as youth and students . . the Ecumenical Global Gathering of Youth and Students (EGGYS) offers an opportunity for us to build our vision together. We recognize that the construction of a global vision will come from our praxis and solidarity we forge with the poor and marginalized in our societies".

1. *The quest for truth* : The learning process should not be confined within the four walls of the classroom. Our quest for truth must necessarily lead us beyond the gates of our schools and universities to the streets, the countryside, the shanty-towns and factories. Only then can we examine and analyze the gap between reality as it is presented by our textbooks and reality as it is lived by the people. Having done so, we can then embark in an educational process that is meaningful and life enhancing because it is directed towards change.

2. *A network of truth-seekers* : If we want our voices to be heard, we share the truth with others. We need to create a network of youth and studentswho share the same vision and goals. We need to connect with other organisations and movements to be able to make an impact in society.

The Working Group on Women

The dual mandate of the EGGYS Working Group on Women is to reflect the specific perspectives of young women and the issues that inform their struggle; and to develop proposals and actions to ensure the full participation of young women in the EGGYS process. Both these goals were addressed in the working group meeting.

Violence against women, women and leadership, and biblical perspective on the status of women were the issues addressed in length by young women.

The group was unequivocal on the question of violence against women:

"Violence against women can no longer be ignored in any region of the world. The Bible speaks against it. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights speaks against it, and it is now time for us to begin to SPEAK OUT AGAINST IT!"

Six "Actions and Recommendations" for the EGGYS process and Gathering were agreed by the group, and included "breaking the silence" on the issue, to ensure that women can express their experience of violence against them, and the development of a world-wide symbol against violence on women.

Young women's leadership is a threat to patriarchal social systems that assume women's marginality in structures oriented towards male leadership. Leadership must be given to young women as they seek better training and participation in building a more just society. Women's leadership must be developed in both non-institutionalised and institutionalised situations with practical suggestions to overcome the inherent injustices. Five aspects of this process will be:

- young women must be given the opportunity to know herself better through collective processes with other women identifying the mutual possibilities;
- scholarships and support for study by young women;
- the provision of opportunities for political mobilisation and awareness of young women vis-a-vis their social responsibility, and in order to not reproduce the male model of organisation of society;
- financing projects of young women organising themselves;
- to keep seriously in mind the ecumenical task in the process, and that women's organisations be without any distinction of race, class, religion etc . . .

Actual bible study together complemented the groups reflections on women and bible study as they realised that :

". . . many women have experienced a "crisis of faith", a moment or an experience in which she has realised her "Otherness" from the tradition or her separateness from a traditional concept of the male God. This crisis has spurred many women to action - to become involved in the process of creating theology that is reflective of women's experience".

Jesus manifested a "radical equality" in His own life, and the responsibility of young women to their churches is to ensure that the Bible or the tradition is not used against them, to subdue or suppress. The riches of women's theologising, and reflection from the Bible must be recaptured, and theology must be done used a variety of methodologies that empower and enlighten.

In response to its second mandate - to develop proposals and actions to ensure the full participation of young women in the EGGYS process - the group provided a series of recommendations for action for the EGGYS process; for the EGGYS Gathering; for the process after the Gathering; and for each of the EGGYS Working Groups.

Lent - An Invitation to Conversion

Deserts. Abysses. Valleys of "the shadow of death." The bottom of the pit...

The celebration of Lent, as a part of the preparation for the Global Gathering of Youth, should be a moment of profound conversion. This involves a deep examination of each of our lives, as well as of the life of the human race.

The purpose of the ashes on the Wednesday when the season of Lent begins is to remind us of our temporality, of our limitations, of our dependence on God.

The fire that produces the ashes is also the fire that burns and purifies, the fire that illuminates and lights, that draws those on who are walking without direction.

Lent is an invitation to penetrate deeply in the human experience of aloneness, of privacy, of the search for meaning. It is also an opportunity to develop a healthy experience of dependence on God, as occurred in the desert, when the people followed the cloud, as occurred with the column of fire, as occurred with the manna. Signals of the "passage," of the "way" to Easter.

"ANOINT US"

(adapted from "No Longer Strangers", in: "Peace with Justice, NCCP - Philippines)

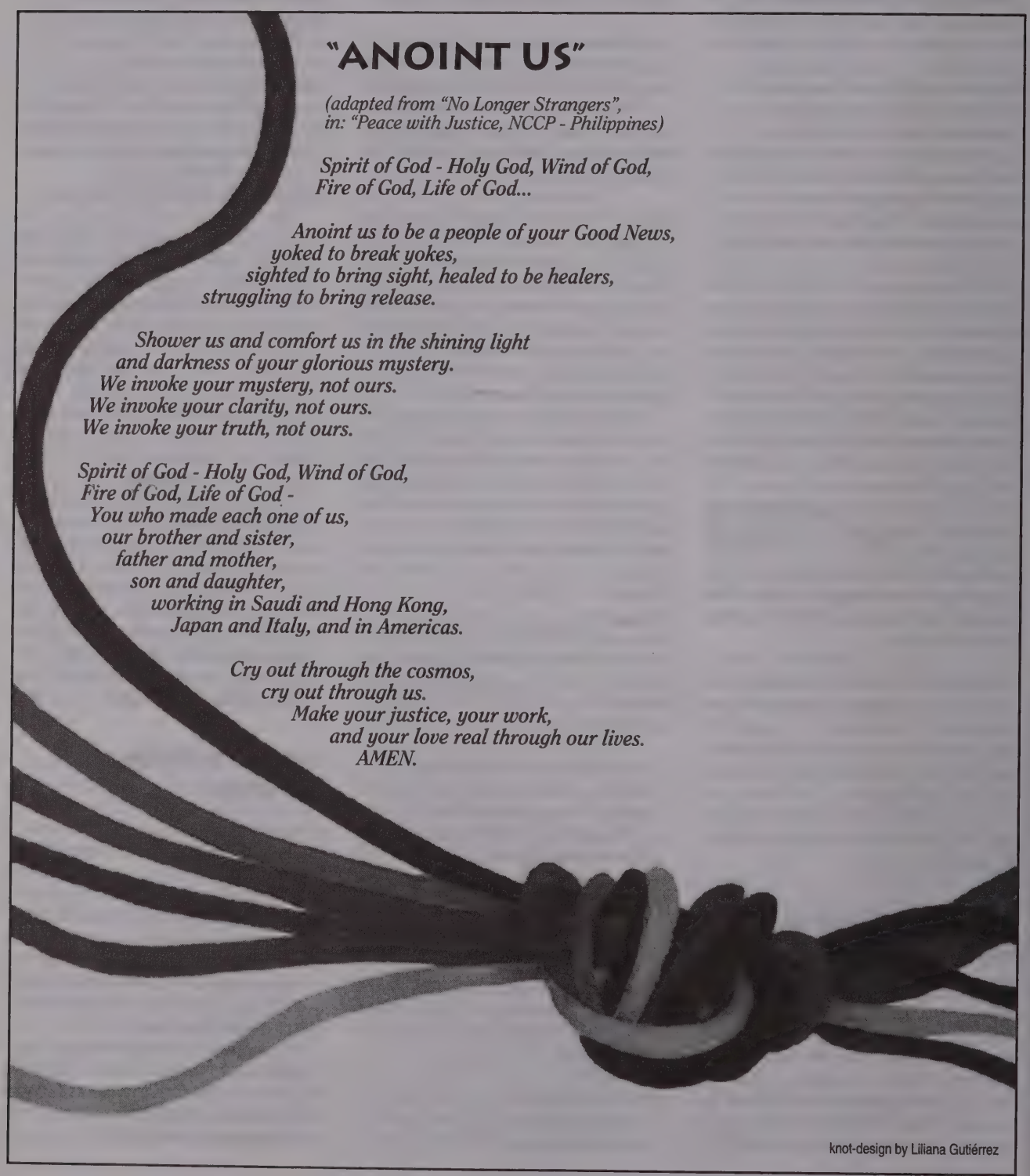
Spirit of God - Holy God, Wind of God,
Fire of God, Life of God...

Anoint us to be a people of your Good News,
yoked to break yokes,
sighted to bring sight, healed to be healers,
struggling to bring release.

Shower us and comfort us in the shining light
and darkness of your glorious mystery.
We invoke your mystery, not ours.
We invoke your clarity, not ours.
We invoke your truth, not ours.

Spirit of God - Holy God, Wind of God,
Fire of God, Life of God -
You who made each one of us,
our brother and sister,
father and mother,
son and daughter,
working in Saudi and Hong Kong,
Japan and Italy, and in Americas.

Cry out through the cosmos,
cry out through us.
Make your justice, your work,
and your love real through our lives.
AMEN.



knot-design by Liliana Gutiérrez

Prayer of Thanksgiving on the occasion of the Year of Indigenous People

God, our Creator,
we thank you for our indigenous sisters,
their mothers and fathers,
sisters and brothers,
children, companions,
and all their ancestors,
for their living respect for Mother Earth
since immemorial times.

We give thanks, God, for our indigenous sisters,
their resistance and courage,
care and joy,
in the endless struggle for life
overcoming centuries of destruction and death.

We give you thanks, God, for our indigenous sisters,
their history shared with us,
their wisdom shared with us,
their hope shared with us,
making the links of our sisterhood stronger.

We also want to remember, our God,
all sisters around the world:
from north and south,
from west and east,
that they may be moved
by the wind of Ruach, the Spirit,
becoming living instruments
of healing in the world.

Amen.

Dankgebet anläßlich des Jahres der Urvölker

Gott, unser Schöpfer,
wir danken dir für unsere Schwestern in den Urvölkern,
ihre Mütter und Väter,
Kinder, Gefährten,
und alle ihre Vorfahren,
und ihre lebendige Achtung vor der Mutter Erde
seit Menschengedenken.

Wir sagen dir Dank, Gott, für unsere Schwestern in den Urvölkern,
ihren Widerstand und Mut,
ihre Sorge und Freude,
im unablässigen Einsatz für das Leben,
indem sie Jahrhunderte der Zerstörung und des Todes überwinden.

Wir sagen dir Dank, Gott, für unsere Schwestern in den Urvölkern,
ihre Geschichte, ihre Weisheit,
ihre Hoffnung, an denen sie uns teilhaben lassen;
dadurch werden wir als Schwestern stärker mit ihnen verbunden.

Gott, wir wollen auch an alle Schwestern überall in der Welt denken,
im Norden und im Süden,
im Westen und im Osten,
mögen sie vom Wind der Ruach,
des Geistes, bewegt werden
und lebendige Instrumente
der Heilung in der Welt werden.

Amen.

Prières d'actions de grâces composée à l'occasion de l'Année internationale des populations autochtones

Dieu, notre Créateur,
Nous te rendons grâce pour nos soeurs autochtones,
pour leurs mères et leurs pères,
pour leurs soeurs et leurs frères,
pour leurs enfants, leurs compagnons,
et pour tous leurs ancêtres,
pour le respect qu'elles manifestent à la Terre mère
depuis des temps immémoriaux.

Nous te rendons grâce, O Dieu, pour nos soeurs autochtones,
pour leur résistance et leur courage,
pour leur amour et leur joie,
dans le combat incessant qu'elles ont mené pour vivre
à travers des siècles de destruction et de mort.

Nous te rendons grâces, O Dieu, pour nos soeurs autochtones,
pour leur histoire partagée avec nous,
leur sagesse partagée avec nous,
leurs espoirs partagés avec nous,
qui resserrent les liens de notre solidarité entre soeurs.

Nous voulons aussi nous souvenir, O notre Dieu,
de toutes nos soeurs à travers le monde,
du nord au sud,
de l'est à l'ouest,
afin qu'elles soient portées par le souffle de Ruach, l'Esprit,
et deviennent des instruments vivants
de la réconciliation dans le monde.

Amen.

Oración de acción de gracias con ocasión del Año de los pueblos indígenas

Dios, creador nuestro,
te damos las gracias por nuestras hermanas indígenas,
por sus madres y padres,
hermanas y hermanos,
hijos, compañeros,
y todos sus antepasados,
por el respeto que muestran hacia la Tierra Madre
desde siglos y siglos.

Te damos gracias Señor, por nuestras hermanas indígenas,
por su tenacidad y valor,
su amor y alegría
en la permanente lucha por la vida
superando siglos de destrucción y de muerte.

Te damos gracias Dios, por nuestras hermanas indígenas,
que comparten la historia de su vida con nosotras,
su sabiduría con nosotras,
su esperanza con nosotras,
y han estrechado los lazos de nuestra hermandad.

También queremos recordar Señor,
a nuestras hermanas en todo el mundo:
del norte al sur,
del oeste a este,
para que sean llevadas
por el soplo de Ruach, el Espíritu,
y se conviertan en instrumentos vivos
de curación en el mundo.

Amén.

Marilia Schüller

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE ISSUES OF RACISM, ETHNICITY AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The PCR team had several ideas for this issues of Echoes, but we decided that instead of one member of the team writing something from their own perspective, it would be more important to hear how members of our constituency viewed the issues of racism, ethnicity and indigenous peoples. We decided to pose the same question to a representative group of people. We asked them:

"The Programme to Combat Racism is involved in issues related to racism, ethnicity and Indigenous Peoples. How are any of these issues experienced in your community and how are they connected to emerging trends in the world today?"

Excerpts of the responses are found below. We were so impressed with the answers we received, we felt we could not summarize them (only highlighting a few sentences); but instead decided to include large segments of each response. The excerpts below are grouped according to whether the issue of racism, ethnicity or Indigenous Peoples was emphasized. Since there are responses from several countries under each issue, one can more easily appreciate the global nature and manifestation of these issues.

RACISM

Japan

To some, racism in Japan is like a sleeping dog, hidden from public sight in a dark backroom. This view of the reality of racism, teaches that it is best to let it lie, not calling it by name, or turning a spotlight on it. Today, whether slumbering or stalking the land, racism is a live entity in Japan. It is a daily experience to the peoples who have been targets of prejudice, discrimination and cultural genocide from ancient and medieval times, and in modern and recent days. For the Ainu native people, for the ex-Ryukyu Kingdom Okinawan people, for the discriminated Buraku caste-background people, for the ex-colonial, ex-citizen "alien" people of Japan's imperialistic rule in Taiwan, Korea and China, and for the latest fodder for the Japanese giant (refugees, migrants, indentured labor, hired, women, etc.), the experiences of violence, of indignities, of exploitation, of alienation differ according to time and place. The daily issues may vary, but the root cause of their pain, segregation and deprivation is the same.

In this Year of Indigenous Peoples, an accounting for the anti-aboriginal nature of Japanese racism could rightfully be expected. As apartheidists in South Africa reap the harvest of their own making, and enter a new era of the total reconstruction of values and communities, similar systems in Japan sharing the same historic span face continued demands for radical restitution and change. As the world suffers the new pains of the breakup of two world power hegemony, and learns anew the responsibilities of "small is beautiful" in ethnically diverse, religiously varied, historically inter-dependent contexts, how will the Japanese deal with their Asian neighbors, internally and internationally?

Soo Hae Oh

South Africa

It is a well know fact that the doctrine of apartheid over emphasized racism and ethnicity. Racial classification disadvantaged black people in that it determined the quality and standard of life they could aspire to attain; it determined their status, prospects, rights; opportunities, hopes and frustrations; how much they could earn and the type of education they could receive.

Although black people were adversely affected by racism, black women in particular have received the most devastating blows. Like their male counterparts, they could not vote and without political power there was no hope of changing their prospects for

job and educational opportunities. Women suffered as blacks on the one hand and as women on the other. However, this double oppression did not deter the women from engaging in the struggle for liberation and for the restoration of their human dignity. They have had to exert greater strength and evince higher qualities of moral fibre and character than men.

Mmatala Zach Chuenyane

Brasil

Há cinco on seis anos atrás, quando começamos a sistematizar melhor as nossas atividades de combate ao racismo, imaginávamos que um futuro mais promissor nos esperava. Mobilizamos o país contra o Apartheid sul-africano, reivindicamos maior espaço dentro das igrejas e exigimos que estas participassem efetivamente da nossa luta contra o racismo.

Paralelo a nossa luta de combate ao racismo, víamos com alegria e esperança o avanço do solidariedade na Polonia, da Glasnost e Perestroika na ex-Uniao Soviética, da mobilizaçao das igrejas e do povo alemao para reunificar a Alemanha, do intercâmbio entre as várias organizações de luta contra o racismo a nivel latino-americano, contando com a presença dinâmica e significativa do PCR/WCC assessorando-nos como nunca fizera antes.

Repentinamente as coisas começaram a mudar. Em Los Angeles a máscara cai, mostrando ao mundo como o racismo continua sendo profundo entre as várias etnias. A queda da Uniao Soviética provoca o ressurgimento de velhos rancores que explodem através de guerras localizadas e lamentáveis. Em Berlim ressurge o nazismo de nefasta memória e o mesmo chega ao Brasil, onde negros, judeus e nordestinos (mestiços), sao hostilizados e agredidos por grupos nazistas brasileiros, imitaçao estúpida dos grupos alemaes.

Como grupos racialmente oprimidos da América Latina, estamos absolutamente conscientes que precisamos repensar a nossa luta e estratégias considerando estas novas e opressoras tendências. Estamos entendendo, através do sofrimento e da dor, que necessitamos unir as nossas esperanças. Nossa unidade de luta contra um mesmo inimigo é a resposta mais vibrante que podemos dar. Temos que derrubar algumas barreiras tradicionais que nos têm desunido.(...) Quem somos? O que queremos? Para onde vamos? Quais sao as nossas prioridades? Respostas a estas perguntas sao fundamentais para que avancemos.

Antonio Olimpio de Sant'Ana

United States

At this time in the first months of 1993, the 11 million plus inhabitants of the Los Angeles community are waiting for the outcome of two trials which may trigger another uprising related to the one experienced in April and May of 1992. While many in government and the dominated society condemned those who rebelled as "hoodlums" and the "lawless few", they continued the historical U.S. charade of denial and silence regarding human rights abuses inflicted by police on racial minorities, the Native American Indians, and others in this country.

In the language of those who seek to shield their "civilizations" from the resistance of the oppressed and the criticism of others, violence against racial minorities and others are diminished in language and minimized in courts of law and the halls of government. In 1991, an African American is kicked and hit with metal batons over 56 times, electrocuted with high voltage, his hands and feet are tied together behind his back while he is psychologically tormented and it is said that he has been "beaten" and the four white police officers accused face 10 years in prison. In 1992, when a white person receives about ten blows to the head and body, it is termed "torture" and the African Americans accused face life imprisonment. Daily, innocent

Racial classification disadvantaged black people in that it determined the quality and standard of life they could aspire to attain; it determined their status, prospects, rights; opportunities, hopes and frustrations; how much they could earn and the type of education they could receive.

African Americans are subjected to questioning while forced to lie face down on the street, or in handcuffs clamped tightly on the wrists, and are sometimes tortured or coerced into confessions, all in the name of the "war on drugs and gangs". African American death in police custody is often blamed on drug use in spite of evidence of beating, choking, or use of chemical agents which cause suffocation. This practice

"todo hombre es igual ante la ley y no podrá hacerse discriminación alguna contraria a la dignidad humana"

of denial and deceit has a long history in this country and is not limited to the community of Los Angeles.

The same strains of hypocrisy and deceit are practiced on an international level for "national security" and "defense of democracy", amongst other reasons. The U.S. Supreme Court, the highest authority of law in this country, recently ratified the illegal acts of U.S. police agents as they violate international law and common-law by kidnapping foreign citizens from other countries. For years, racist South Africa was encouraged by the U.S. to violate UN resolutions and World Court decisions calling for independence for Namibia (Walvis Bay is still not entirely in Namibian hands). At the same time, the U.S. supported and encouraged Iraq to break international law and invade Iran, and ignored the gassing of Kurds and the death of over a million people as a result of this aggression. Later, without apology, remorse, or explanation, the U.S. destroys Iraq's infrastructure and kills thousands of civilians for committing much less heinous acts in Kuwait.

In Los Angeles, state crimes of false propaganda and other deceits, the denial of human rights abuses, and the situational application of standards of law based on self interest have resulted in violence such as that seen in April and May of 1992. In our world today, we should expect no different response.

James M. Simmons

Europe

It is in the examination of the freedom of movement of people that it is easy to discover the prospect of a European Community in which some people will be distinctly more free than others. For Black people generally, there are two broad issues. Firstly, many Black people who already live legally within the European Community will find themselves less free to be mobile within the community. Secondly, many Black people outside the Community will be less free to get access to it. These are not statements of contention, but clear, simple, indisputable statement of fact.

In relation to the 1992 Right of Freedom of Movement, there is a fundamental issue which must be addressed because to a large degree, its effect is detrimental to Black people in general and Black women in particular. Freedom of movement is described as a right of every citizen of the European Community. Citizens will thus acquire a right which other lawful residents will not acquire. Let me illustrate this with an example from the U.K., which has the largest number of Black and ethnic minority residents. In the U.K., we have many Black legal residents - people who have the right to vote or seek election as candidates in local, national or European elections. They can be legal residents with all those rights without being citizens. There are many Blacks originating from India or Pakistan - countries which do not allow dual nationality - who knowing that maintenance of their Indian or Pakistani citizenship does not prejudice their legal rights in the U.K., now find that their lack of citizenship prejudices their post 1992 right of freedom of movement.

It is imperative that legal Community residents should have the same rights of mobility as Community citizens. Failure to address this simple question will have a

disproportionately disadvantageous effect on Blacks in general, and Black women in particular.

Paulette Fuller

United States

Near and dear to the U.S. American psyche is the desire to be "Number 1". Although this is far from attainment in terms of literacy, housing, infant viability, health care, or longevity, it has been achieved in one area: the incarceration rate. In 1925, the U.S. incarceration rate per 100,000 was 79, roughly equal to the present rate in Austria (77) and France (81). Since that time, the U.S. rate has increased by over five-fold, to 426, surpassing South Africa's 333 and the former USSR's 268. For African American males, the rate is eight times yet higher, climbing to 3,109; *four times the incarceration for Black males in South Africa (729).*

These statistics speak volumes about the racist nature of the arrest, trial, and conviction of African Americans and other people of colour in the U.S.. What may be less apparent, however, is the use of the "criminal justice" system as a means of social control. The imprisonment of roughly 100 political prisoners and prisoners of war in the U.S. further reveals the government's inability to tolerate serious dissent. Internationally recognized leaders (such as Leonard Peltier, Geronimo Ji-Jaga (Pratt), and Alejandrina Torres) from the American Indian Movement, Black Panther Party, and Puerto Rican Independence Movement, respectively, have been imprisoned for 10-20 years, longer than the average sentence for murder before parole.

The climate of repression against people of color in the U.S. mirrors that waged against people of color around the world by U.S. economic and military policies. People of color within the U.S., like those around the world, are waiting to see whether the new administration will take significant steps towards justice and human rights. We are waiting — hoping — praying, and organizing.

Cynthia Ikuta

Costa Rica

El racismo se da en nuestro país de forma sutil ya que por ser un país "democrático" no evidencia en forma agresiva este pecado, pero se nota en la actitud de los que forman la clase mayoritaria, por medio de prejuicios y esteriotipos. Esta actitud es tan permeada del mal que se vuelve una práctica cotidiana que parece normal porque cuando algún afrocostarricense reclama que está siendo agredido(a) por su raza es catalogado(a) como acomplejado(a) o racista.

En el apartado de derechos y garantías individuales de la constitución política de la república de Costa Rica, en su artículo número 33 dice: "todo hombre es igual ante la ley y no podrá hacerse discriminación alguna contraria a la dignidad humana".

Sin embargo, a los ciudadanos afro se les sigue discriminando de diversas maneras, sea por chistes; sea por prejuicios (los negros pueden ser amigos pero no pueden casarse con nuestros hijos); sea por esteriotipos (todos los negros son buenos atletas, buenos bailarines y cocineros, vagos, feos y toscos); sea por ausencia total de imágenes e historia afro en la educación o sea por la ausencia casi total de los negros en los medios masivos y si aparece uno es de forma esteriotipada.

Estas actitudes van en contra de la dignidad humana porque acciones de menosprecio y falta de respeto evidencian un sentido de superioridad que no permite respetar la alteridad.

Como resultado, los afrocostarricenses viven este racismo en forma alienada, con sentimientos de minusvalía, odio, retraimiento y rabia.

La práctica del racismo es tan sutil en Costa Rica que se requiere del desarrollo de la conciencia en forma aguda para poder ver más allá de lo que nos enseñan. Nosotros que estamos en la lucha contra el racismo, creemos que somos los primeros responsables en hacer el señalamiento, las denuncias y las luchas necesarias para lograr los cambios para una mejor calidad de vida para todos.

Carmen Hutchinson Miller

ETHNICITY

Trinidad

While racial discrimination and ethnic rivalries have pervaded the bi-polar society of Trinidad, it is however mainly during periods of economic hardships and/or intense political competition that the focus on these issues have been sharpened. Emerging from a colonial philosophy of divide and rule, competition for economic and political power amongst the races has always existed. Such competition, in the contemporary period, has resulted in political domination by one of the majority races, namely the Afro-Trinidadians, while the other majority race, Indo-Trinidadians, joins with minority racial blocs (European and Syrian-Lebanese) in dominating economic power. It is in this scenario that racial and ethnic stereotyping has been maintained, with perceptions of racial and ethnic bias. To be sure, with political power and control of the state apparatus in the hands of Afro-Trinidadians, it has been the perception that through its state power, the economic interest of its own communal group has been perpetuated, resulting in claims of over-representation of Afro-Trinidadians in the public sector, and in the uneven distribution of employment relief programmes, with areas

of high Afro-Trinidadian populations benefitting. On the other side, allegations of bias have been made in regard to the establishment of obstacles to prevent the entry of Afro-Trinidadians into the business or private sector.

Such claims have forced the government to establish a Center for Ethnic Studies, which is currently pursuing research into the validity of concerns related to perceptions of racial discrimination both in the public and private sectors. The establishment of the Centre brings home the point that there are significant underlying racial and ethnic tensions within the mind-set of all segments of the population, which, if not urgently and delicately dealt with, can erupt into full-blown communal rivalries and violence. If that should come to pass, then Trinidad could be on the road, similar to other bi-polar plural societies, torn with racial and ethnic strife. In this regard, and with no end in sight of the current economic recession, it is left now to the political leaders, on both sides of the racial divide, to temper their claims and to restrain their followers if the type of racial and ethnic harmony that Trinidad has become accustomed to is to maintained.

Dr. Bishnu Ragoonath

United States

The Chicano or Mexican American community is the largest indigenous population in the United States of American, numbering about 13 million people. Clearly, with regard to the growing indigenous rights movement in the world, Chicanos stand to be one of the strongest voices of that movement. It would seem reasonable, moreover, to expect Chicanos to be recognized as a significant cultural group in this country. However, person/group relationships in America are largely predicated not on culture but race, color of skin. One's ethnicity or family origin, therefore may serve solely to explain one's last name — actual ties to a group ethos have been severed within one or two generations for most Americans. Gone along with such ties is the ability to speak a language other than English. Since all but indigenous peoples are recent immigrants to North America, it is ironic that enshrining English as the official language through a constitutional amendment has become a national cause, promoted by a well-funded organization. Chicanos and other ethnic groups with different mother tongues fear that the official English movement masks basic racial bias. An inherent indigenous trait—fluency in another language—becomes perceived as a sign of alienness, even un-Americanism.

Historically, racism in U.S. society has meant the oppression of peoples of color and it continues to be the dominant force in determining social rank and preference. Within only the past three decades, however, indigenous peoples have begun to force American society, perceived solely as white vs. black, to recognize the presence and potential of indigenous cultures.

Armando Rendon

Uganda

The ethnicity problem in Uganda with reference to the Rwandese, is based on the fear on the part of the rest of the Ugandans, especially those who have settled with them, that they are progressive and opportunistic and unless they are nipped in the bud, they may become rulers of Uganda. This fear was very much manifested during Idi Amin's era and recently during and after the National Resistance Movement/National Resistance Army (NRM/NRA) Bush war. During the two periods, some Banyarwanda (people of Rwanda) participated in the intelligence and military systems and some attained high military ranks, while some of the civilians have also emerged as businessmen, professionals and Civil Servants. Because of this, they have earned the envy of some indigenous Ugandans.

An example of the ill-feelings some Ugandans have against the Banyarwanda was during the 1982-83 evictions in Rakai, Mbarara and Bushenyi Districts.

During that period, the Uganda People's Congress

Historically, racism in U.S. society has meant the oppression of peoples of color and it continues to be the dominant force in determining social rank and preference.

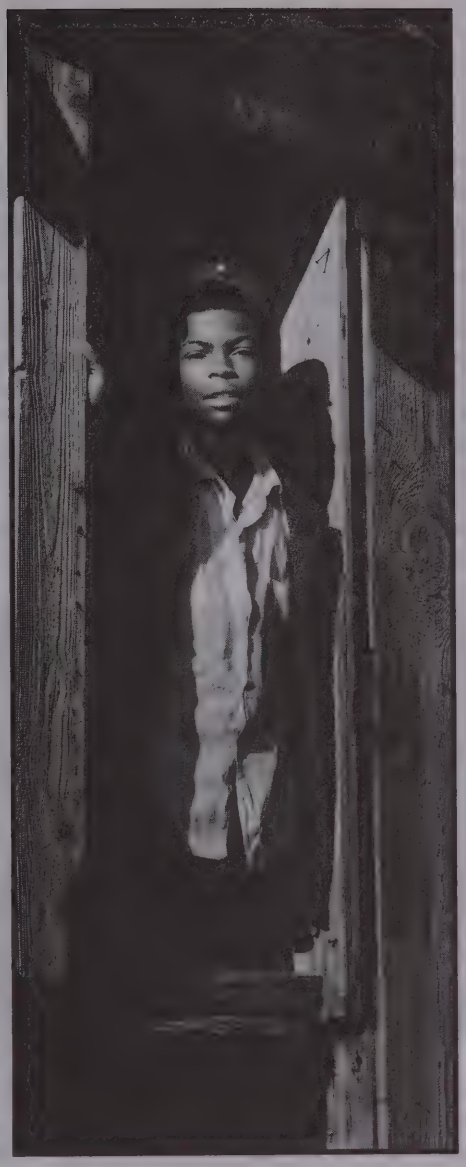
(UPC) Youth Wingers (youth group of the ruling party in Uganda), commandeered by UPC stalwarts in Kampala, evicted the Banyarwanda from their homes and land, irrespective of the period they had been in Uganda, and herded some into the refugees' settlements, while others fled into Tanzania and Rwanda itself. The main reason for the evictions according to some people was that they were anti-UPC and had not voted for it during the general elections of 1980. But strictly speaking, it was because a lot of Banyarwanda youth were joining the bush and fighting against the UPC government with a view of attaining military skills to fight for a homeland.

After the bush war, the Banyarwanda fighters continued to operate in the ranks of the NRA until the invasion of Rwanda in October 1990. For this reason, much of the anti-NRM/NRA campaign in and outside Uganda accuses the Banyarwanda as not only "masters" of the country, but also as the main beneficiaries of Government favours both in the past as well as present regimes in Uganda. While this is by no means true, it creates a volatile situation of ethnic tension which can manifest itself again into ugly occurrences as those of 1980's or worse.

There are approximately over one million Banyarwanda in Uganda, out of a total population of 16 million people. Since 1980 they experienced waves of xenophobia, branding them as foreigners with no right to be in Uganda.

It is precisely because of this that the refugees who were recruited into NRA to oust the UPC regime deserted en mass and invaded Rwanda in October 1990 to fight for a right to return home.

Joan Kakwenzire



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

India

Out of a population of some 840 million in India today, about 23% are of indigenous origin. They are the so called scheduled caste and scheduled tribes, collectively known as Dalits which is a Sanskrit word for the oppressed. The oppression arises because of the four fold caste system peculiar to the Hindu religion which dominates Indian culture and society. This caste stratification is an alien concept to the indigenous people of India, first introduced two thousand years ago by migrating bands of Aryan people who invaded the country. Though untouchability was abolished by law in 1950, it is a sad fact that it is still practised in many parts of India today. Segregated housing is a visible discrimination as each village is divided into a caste and Dalit colonies. Out of about 80% of the rural population we see this prevalent discrimination in housing. They are still not allowed access to the public well in the caste villages. Dalits still get tea or coffee served in separate cups. Dalits are often bonded servants to landlords. They still get abused physically. Instances of Dalit women being raped and sold now appear in the Press. Atrocities like burning the home of Dalits and killings of Dalit people still go uninvestigated.

Discrimination persists in marriages, separate cemeteries. Dalits still remain an oppressed and voiceless people.

Though there is a slow breaking down of the old order as in other parts of the world, there is yet a vast majority of the silent oppressed in our villages waiting to experience real freedom in their life. A large number of Dalits lack the courage to stand up individually against unjust structures. The emergence of Dalit leaders and new education programmes gives some hope that we will get our legitimate human rights through out struggles for justice. We shall overcome!

Paul Panneer Selvam

United States

We experience racism in several different ways in our south central part of Wisconsin. Indigenous peoples in Southern Wisconsin were subjected to several mindless racist attacks. For example, in 1990, the Wunk Sheek Indigenous Students' group at the University of Wisconsin - Madison, found a dead fish with a crude makeshift spear stuck through it outside their office

door. In 1991, a family from southern Dane County (where Madison and the Native American Center are located), had a window broken by rocks in the night. When they got up to investigate, there was a cross buring on their lawn (burning crosses are the symbol of the Ku Klux Klan, a white supremacist group). The father and children of the family are Native Americans.

In additon, Indian gaming has become an issue in the state. Wisconsin state law allows casino-type gambling, but the Governor and many legislators want to ban the casinos. Some see it as unequal rights and others because they oppose gambling. Tavern owners claim that they are being hurt econmically by the Indian casinos. The newspapers throughout the state have been full of anti-Indian and anti-gambling rhetoric. Currently, the city of Madison is attempting to keep the Winnebago tribe from building a casino near Madison on land owned by the tribe. Under state law, the casino should be legal, but many top officials in the area are working to keep the casino from being built, including the Mayor of Madison, the Dane County Executive, and again, the Governor of Wisconsin.

At other times, Native people are simply ignored. Many multicultural task forces and panels in Madison, Dane County and among private institutions include Asian American, African American and Latin American representation, but no Native American representation. When confronted on this issue by concerned Native Americans of this area, some people voice their unawareness that the Madison area has an Indian community. Recently, a United Way program on multicultural community organizing against use of drugs and alcohol, funded Asian, African, and Latin-American programs, but left out Native Americans because they were unaware of a community need for such a program. This is a very common occurrence. Insofar as the emerging trends in racism worldwide are based on ignorance of Indigenous Peoples or their rights under the law, then what we see in Wisconsin is part of the same picture.

Art Shegonee

... not small children, but adults who have lost the will to live because the only life they know has been taken from them ...

Bolivia

Bolivia es una nación plurinacional y pluricultural, donde nosotros, los pueblos originarios: Aymaras, Quechuas, Tupiguaraníes y otras naciones desde hace 500 años hemos sido discriminados, sometidos, esclavizados, marginados con toda clase de violencia, pero hemos resistido, seguimos y seguiremos resistiendo con la esperanza de llegar a la liberación.

En la mayoría de los departamentos de nuestro país existen patrones, terratenientes que usurparon y usurpan las tierras de nuestros hermanos, los hacen sufrir en condiciones inhumanas, por el hecho de ser originarios, hecho que va en contra de la voluntad del Dios de la Vida, de esa manera unos pocos tienen todo y la mayoría no tiene nada.

Además en los pueblos de nuestras provincias existe racismo explícito, por parte de los blancos y mestizos, que nos consideran personas de segunda y tercera categoría.

El racismo está centrado más que todo en grandes ciudades. Ejemplo: cuando un compañero(a) va a la ciudad para hacer algún trámite no se le da importancia, los que atienden las oficinas, siempre dicen "vuelva más tarde" o mañana, pasado mañana, la otra semana, y no hay cuando llegue el momento. De esa manera se practica la burocracia de los que gobiernan.

Es más, en estos últimos años hay migración a la ciudad en busca de trabajo, debido a la crisis económica, por falta de tierra, por la pobreza del campo. (...)

En este sentido el 12 de octubre de 1992, en una movilización masiva de los originarios denunciamos la injusticia social y rechazamos toda celebración triunfalista de los 500 años, reclamamos las

reivindicaciones de las mayorías marginadas, a la vez inauguramos la Asamblea de las Naciones Originarias, porque no somos etnias, tampoco somo indígenas, ni indios, sino somos "Naciones Originarias", llegó el Pachakuti, la nueva era de cambios y transformación de este sistema de explotación.

Vincenta Mamani

Botswana

Almost the whole of the Kgalagadi 'desert' has been divided up into private ranches. With the completion of fence construction, the wildlife can no longer range freely, as they need to in order to survive on the sparse grazing and forage of the area. Even worse, letting cattle graze in large numbers within fenced padlocks could reduce the whole area to a true sand desert in a few years. If the delicate Kgalagadi ecosystem is destroyed, then the livelihood of the San (the Basarwa people), who depend on hunting and gathering, is also destroyed. Most of them have been living in a sort of government camp at Ghanzi since most of 1992, a situation which you will well appreciate is demoralising to the extent that it could without much exaggeration be called genocide; their culture and livelihood are dying. Many of them will die when these supports to their existence vanish. And this is apparently not a deliberate extermination out of racial hatred; they are just being swept aside because they stand in the way of the further enrichment of a few very rich men.

Trainers from Zimbabwe are involved in a scheme to teach the San 'sustainable agriculture'; if you can find any humour in a situation like this, one must laugh at the idea of anyone teach them ecology, but I am moved more to disgust by the use of trendy language to get well-meaning donors and development workers to help whitewash this whole operation.

These trainers reported in December that the San people in the camp in Ghanzi are dying at the rate of 5 per day, not small children, but adults who have lost the will to live because the only life they know has been taken from them. At this rate it won't take very long before they don't exist as a people any more; a situation which could without much exaggeration be called genocide.

Brian MacGarry **sj**

El Salvador

In order to reflect on these concerns as it relates to El Salvador, whose original name was Cuscatlan (Land of riches), it is important to remember that a barbaric aggression against the indigenous peoples, their culture, spirituality and natural resources has been a reality for 500 years and began with a conquest and colonialization. The people rebelled often because the conditions to which they were forced denied dignity for them and their children. So it has been the indigenous peoples who continue to be attacked, since they are the ones who live the worst, thus the ones who readily resist and rebel. In 1932, 30,000 people were murdered in fifteen days. The first targeted were the indigenous peoples who were easily identified by their communities, dress and language. Since then, the indigenous people have co-existed with peasant communities who are mostly of indigenous descent. At present, though most do not speak their language, wear their dress, nor live in community, or practice their traditions, about 800,000 people out of a total population of 5 1/2 million call themselves Nahuat, Maya or Lenca nation. For these nations "indian" is not accepted, indigenous is a little bit more, but they prefer the name of their nation.

In El Salvador there has been fierce repression against the "indian", which is synonymous with bad, ugly, ignorant, stupid, retrograde, and must be exterminated. Most people want and need to "better their race"; that is to be lighter. There is no understanding of what is indigenous in the formation of our nation, although the indigenous is our first racial and cultural root.

If being "indian/indigenous" is bad, it is much worse to be called black (negro). Although we do not have large communities of African descent, it is clear to the naked eye that it is our second race root, although most people would say it is the European one. The African heritage is much more hidden and despised, although we affirm there is no racism in our country. It is those people who are less assimilated, and darker, who do not have land, nor benefits and who are facing not only poverty but also extreme misery.

Marta Benavides
Edgar Nonez
Napo Rodriguez

These excerpts provide a mere glimpse of the issues and struggles which confront the Programme to Combat Racism. PCR stands in solidarity with those who are actively working to combat racism, understand/mediate ethnic conflicts and recognize the plight/empower Indigenous Peoples. In 1993, the work of PCR is more crucial than ever an the World Council of Churches has recommitted itself to these challenges. We hope that you will make a similar recommitment.

... if being indian or indigenous is bad, it is much worse to be called black (negro) ...

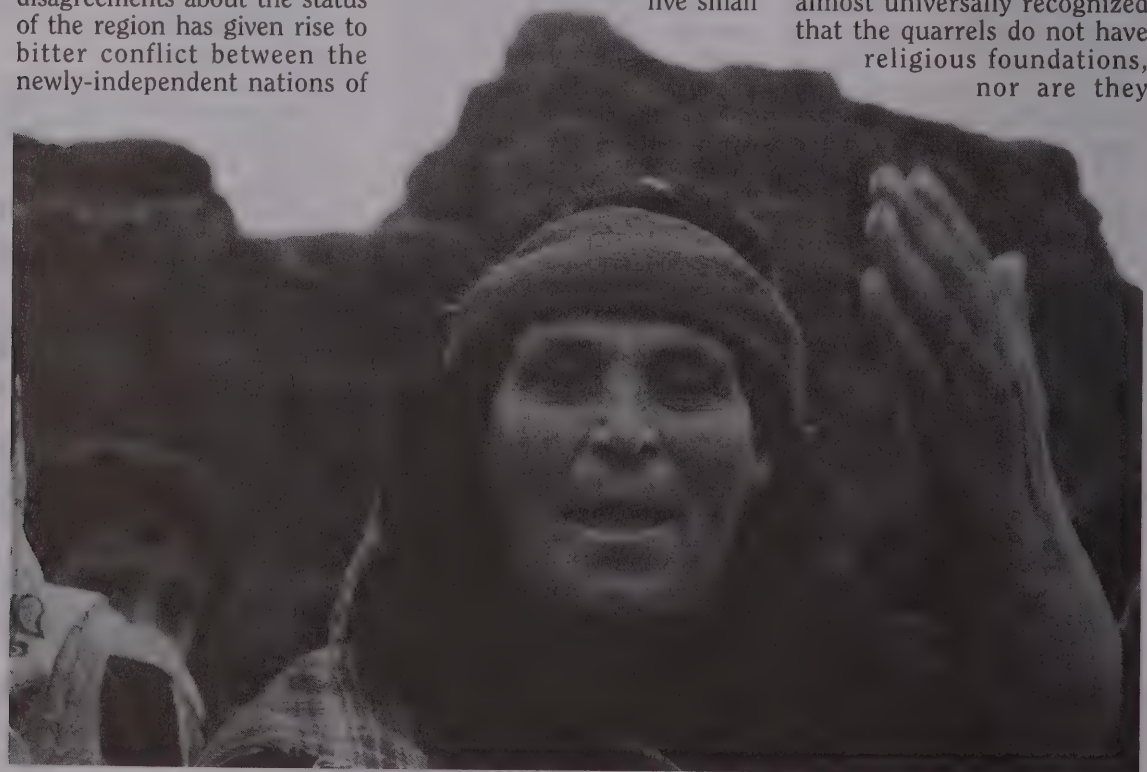
A Sign of Hope
In Trans-Caucasia

The four-wheel drive vehicle advanced gingerly through the muddy field, avoiding the more obvious potholes, following a narrow track which led to a series of hillocks, rising a few feet above the flat, bleak landscape. It was drizzling with rain, and very cold. A young girl driving a donkey, water panniers strapped to its back, was plodding slowly towards the hillocks. Soon a group of people appeared, men, women and children, muffled against the cold, waiting for the vehicle to arrive. "Here are the refugees", said our interpreter.

Indeed, here they were: refugees of Azerbaijani origin, who had fled from the mountainous region of Nagorno-Karabagh, in the Trans-Caucasus. For four years disagreements about the status of the region has given rise to bitter conflict between the newly-independent nations of Armenia and Azerbaijan, once part of the Soviet Union. People of both ethnic groups had lived and worked together in Nagorno-Karabagh for centuries, and, inevitably, the bitter fighting had caused fearful hardships to the peoples of the region, many of whom had been forced to flee.

This group of refugees from the mountains had sought refuge in Agjabedi, not far from the fighting zone. Living in holes dug out of the muddy field, protected only by wooden planks shoring up the sides and plastic sheeting serving as a roof, they were pitifully vulnerable to the elements, as the winter bit deeper, and rain and snow turned the fields into seas of mud. "Home" for one young woman, living with her five small children, was one dug-out room, where they lived and slept, and which contained everything they possessed. The father was away, fighting a war for which he had little appetite.

There are, in all, about one million refugees in Azerbaijan and Armenia. The roots of the conflict causing these massive movements of peoples are complex, and stem from ancient and modern rivalries, Soviet "divide-and-rule" policy, nationalist struggles and economic and political changes which brought to the surface many unresolved resentments. But although the Armenians are chiefly Christian, members of the ancient Armenian Apostolic Church, and the Azeris are mainly of Muslim origin, it is almost universally recognized that the quarrels do not have religious foundations, nor are they



elisabeth salter, wcc

pursued on religious grounds.

It was for this reason, and with the hope that the religious communities in the two countries, far from fuelling hatred and resentment, might instead take steps to seek peace and reconciliation, that a three-person delegation from the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches visited the region late in 1992. The Armenian Apostolic Church had long been a member church of both bodies, but Azerbaijan had never before been visited by any representative of the ecumenical organizations. In each country the team held discussions with government officials and elected representatives (including, in Armenia, President Ter-Petrossian); they talked with refugees living in the bleakest of surroundings; they visited hospitals where young men and women were recovering from the dreadful wounds inflicted on them by sophisticated weapons of war. "We fight our wars with modern weapons", said one surgeon in Armenia, "but our instruments for peace-making are very primitive". The delegation witnessed the deprivation caused to both sides by the continuation of the armed conflict - mirror images of sorrow and suffering.

But, significantly, the delegation obtained the agreement of the spiritual leaders in each country - His Holiness Vasken I, Patriarch-Catholicos of All Armenians, and Sheikh-ul-Islam Pasha-zadeh, Chairman of the Muslim Religious Board for Caucasia - to meet together, at the invitation of the World Council of Churches, in cooperation with the Conference of European Churches, for discussions about their possible rôle in contributing to a peace process.

Early in February 1993 the two religious leaders travelled with their delegations from Holy Echmiadzin in Armenia and Baku in Azerbaijan, for two days of intensive talks at a Montreux hotel, on the shores of Lake Geneva, Switzerland. The result of the talks was a remarkable achievement - a joint communiqué, appealing to their two governments to cease the bloodshed, to solve all problems peacefully, and to proceed to the unconditional release of hostages, at the same time affirming and supporting the efforts of the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to find a solution to the conflict. In addition to the call to peace, however, was a commitment by the two leaders to establish a United International Humanitarian Fund, under the auspices of the WCC and the International Islamic Council for Daw'a and Relief (observers at the meeting) "to render assistance without distinction of nationality or faith to all those who suffer".

Common words, common action, and a common yearning for peace and justice. In spite of all the suffering and bitterness which has divided Azerbaijan and Armenia for so long, there was a sign of real hope in this historic meeting. The refugees living in holes in the ground and bleak, unheated, overcrowded hotel rooms had cried to the delegation, "People come to see us in our miserable conditions, and then go away again. Nothing happens. DO something for us!"

Nearly 90 years ago, the Catholicos had told the meeting, in 1905, a similar threat of potential conflict had arisen between the Armenian and Azeri people. At that time the then Catholicos had travelled to Baku, and had issued a joint call for peace with the then Sheikh-ul-Islam. After it was written and proclaimed, the two men travelled in an open carriage around the streets of Baku, visiting the Armenian and the Azeri quarters in turn. "Why should we not do that today, to show that Christians and Muslims are for peace, and that WE can be together, just as our predecessors were, and just as we have been here in Montreux?"

Since the meeting and the agreement between the two leaders, political discussion has moved a step forward - negotiations about the exchange of hostages are again under way, and the stalled CSCE talks in Rome about the future of Nagorno-Karabagh are to be resumed. Is this a sign for the refugees longing to go home that something IS being done for them? The religious communities of Armenia and Azerbaijan, too, have made their own contribution to genuine peacemaking by taking a first step of faith. God willing - Inshallah, Allah isterzé, Astvacz ouzé - their first step will be one of many on the path to lasting peace and true justice for the long-suffering peoples of Nagorno-Karabagh.

Elizabeth Salter
International Affairs,
Peace and Human Rights
Unit III: Justice, Peace & Creation

A full report of the ecumenical delegation's December 1992 visit to Azerbaijan and Armenia is available from Unit III of the WCC.

Statement of Armenian, Azerbaijani religious leaders

This is the text of a joint statement issued by Vasken I, Catholicos of All Armenia and Sheik-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pasha-zadeh, chairman of the Board of Caucasian Muslims of Azerbaijan following their meeting held in Montreux/Switzerland, 6-8 February.

We, the religious leaders of our two peoples, concerned for the fate of our spiritual children and about the cruelty, evil and hatred which is driving them to actions against the will of God, met in Montreux, Switzerland from 6-8 February 1993, through the grace of God and thanks to the initiative of the World Council of Churches, in cooperation with the Conference of European Churches. The General Secretary of the International Islamic Council for Daw'a and Relief attended as an observer.

Having discussed the problems which threaten our nations and us, we deem it essential first to emphasize that, despite some attempts to characterise the conflict which has resulted in the shedding of innocent blood as a Christian-Muslim confrontation, this is not a religious conflict. Armenian Christians and Azerbaijani Muslims have lived and will live in peace, with respect and good neighbourliness.

We heartily pray to the Most High for the repose of the souls of the victims who have fallen in the course of tragic events. For the sake of their memory, and for the sake of the future of both our nations, we call upon our spiritual children to cease the bloodshed and to solve all problems peacefully, with justice, through political means, in accordance with universally recognised international norms.

We call upon both sides for the unconditional release of their hostages, amongst whom are many women and children, and, in the spirit of the Geneva Convention, to treat their prisoners of war in a humane manner.

We express our satisfaction at international efforts toward peaceful resolution of the conflict, undertaken by representatives of the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international bodies, and by all people of good will who strive honestly for as speedy an end to the bloodshed as possible.

We call upon the Presidents of both Republics to render the maximum assistance to these peaceful initiatives.

Expressing compassion for the victims and for the members of their families, as well as for the peaceful inhabitants who suffer severe hardships and deprivation in the zones of conflict, we agreed to establish a United International Humanitarian Fund, and request the World Council of Churches and the International Islamic Council for Daw'a and Relief to provide their auspices for this Fund to render assistance without distinction of nationality or faith to all those who suffer.

We call upon all people of good will and upon international organisations to assist in every way this work which is pleasing to God. We will appoint our representatives to this Fund and we will exert every effort to make its activities effective.

We express our sincere gratitude to the leadership of the World Council of Churches for organising this meeting and for the hospitality they showed us, and also to the Conference of European Churches and to the International Islamic Council for Daw'a and Relief for their participation in this meeting. We agreed to continue to maintain contact and to organise further meetings in order to strengthen the spirit of good neighbourliness between our peoples.

May the All Merciful Lord hear our prayers, and may He spread his peacemaking Spirit over our peoples and over all the world, that all might find the true way to justice and peace. [EPS 93.02.24]

UN URGES AFRICA TO CUT ON MILITARY SPENDING

by Winnie Ogana

While Africa continues to explain her current socio-economic catastrophes with the impact of the interference by the international community in her affairs, some experts are of the opinion that the continent would have stood the test of time if it had, on the average, given a higher budget cut to human resources and a minimal commitment to military spending.

For years, Africa has blamed her woes on the international community, but the time has come for Africans to acknowledge that the real causes of their continent's poverty and human deprivation are deeply rooted in the national policy actions of their governments.

"The global environment should never be used as an alibi for domestic inaction, nor can global reforms substitute for domestic reforms," Dr Mahbub

ul Haq, a renowned economist, said while presenting the "Human Development Report 1992" of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The report, a third in an annual series, was prepared by an independent team of distinguished economists under Dr Haq, former Finance Minister of Pakistan and now special advisor to the UNDP Administrator.

Speaking at the presentation organised by the Institute of Development Studies, University of Nairobi, Dr Haq observed that domestic reforms call for more open governments, better economic management and massive investment in people and in technology.

A restructuring of budget priorities in Africa, particularly through reductions in military spending and privatization of inefficient public enterprises, could provide sufficient resources for the human capital formation needed by Africans for the development of their continent.

Expressing regret that Africa on average, has 10 times more soldiers than doctors, Dr Haq cited Somalia and Ethiopia as having exceeded their military spending far beyond acceptable levels. In the last two years of the 1980s, Somalia spent 500 percent more on the military budget than on social programmes, while Ethiopia spent 230 percent more (see chart).

Slamming the West in its contribution to this deplorable state of affairs, the economist expressed concern, that about twice as much Western aid is allocated to high military spenders among the African nations than to moderate military spenders. Yet, "if only there was a 3 percent annual cut in military spending in both rich and poor countries the move would yield a US dollar 50 trillion peace dividend that would greatly enhance human development.

Dr Haq called on Africa to revise its development priorities, many of which are distorted. He cited Mali and Sierra Leone, where 90 percent of the health budget is spent on urban hospitals rather than on primary health care programmes for the rural majority. He grouped the hospitals among the various prestige projects that African governments spend scarce capital on.

Highlighting the need for Africa to invest more in food rather than cash crop production, Dr Haq pointed out that the agricultural advice the continent had received from the West on cash crops had cost Africa US$ 50 billion due to declining commodity prices in the 1980s alone. Africa, unfortunately, had received worse advice on agriculture than any other continent, and in the process, has had food and agricultural markets generally destroyed.

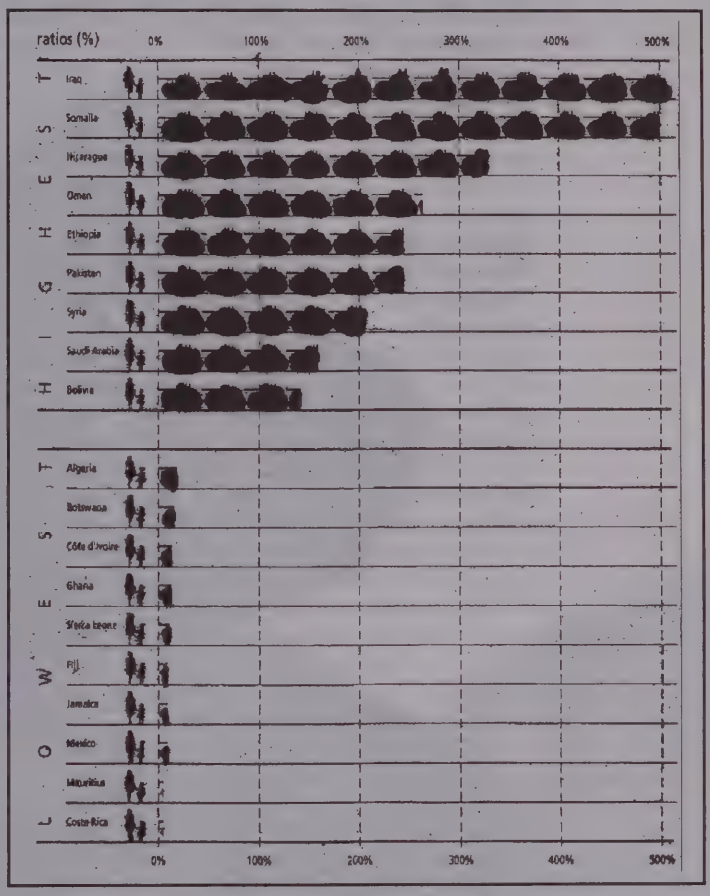
The economist emphasized Africa's need to revamp her foreign aid policies, which largely fall short of achieving their human development objectives. Putting it bluntly, he said, apart from the current aid levels being inadequate, existing aid was badly distributed.

Less than 7 percent of total aid is spent on human priority concerns of basic education, primary health care, safe drinking water, nutrition and family planning programmes. At least 20 percent should be devoted to human priority expenditure of this nature, compared with the present commitment which is pitiably low. He also criticised the practice of spending disproportionately large sums from funds under foreign technical assistance on expatriate salaries, travel and other perks, rather than on the beneficiaries.

Dr Haq failed to see why, for example, in Tanzania, US$ 300 million went into technical assistance annually, while only US$ 100 million was earmarked for civil service salaries over the same period. "Africa should concentrate on helping insiders rather than outsiders" he urged.

"And why should foreign technical advisors be working in Africa while African experts worked outside the continent,

Military / Social spending imbalance in the 3rd World (1987-89)



All Africa Press Service, July 1992

caught up in the brain drain syndrome?" Dr Haq queried. These experts abroad remain there because of poor salaries at home. As an incentive, they should be encouraged to work in their own countries on the same salary scales as outside.

The special advisor also expressed concern that the South did not recognise the potential of South-South collaboration, but instead preferred South-North cooperation. The transfer of experience in the South has therefore been limited, to the detriment of development.

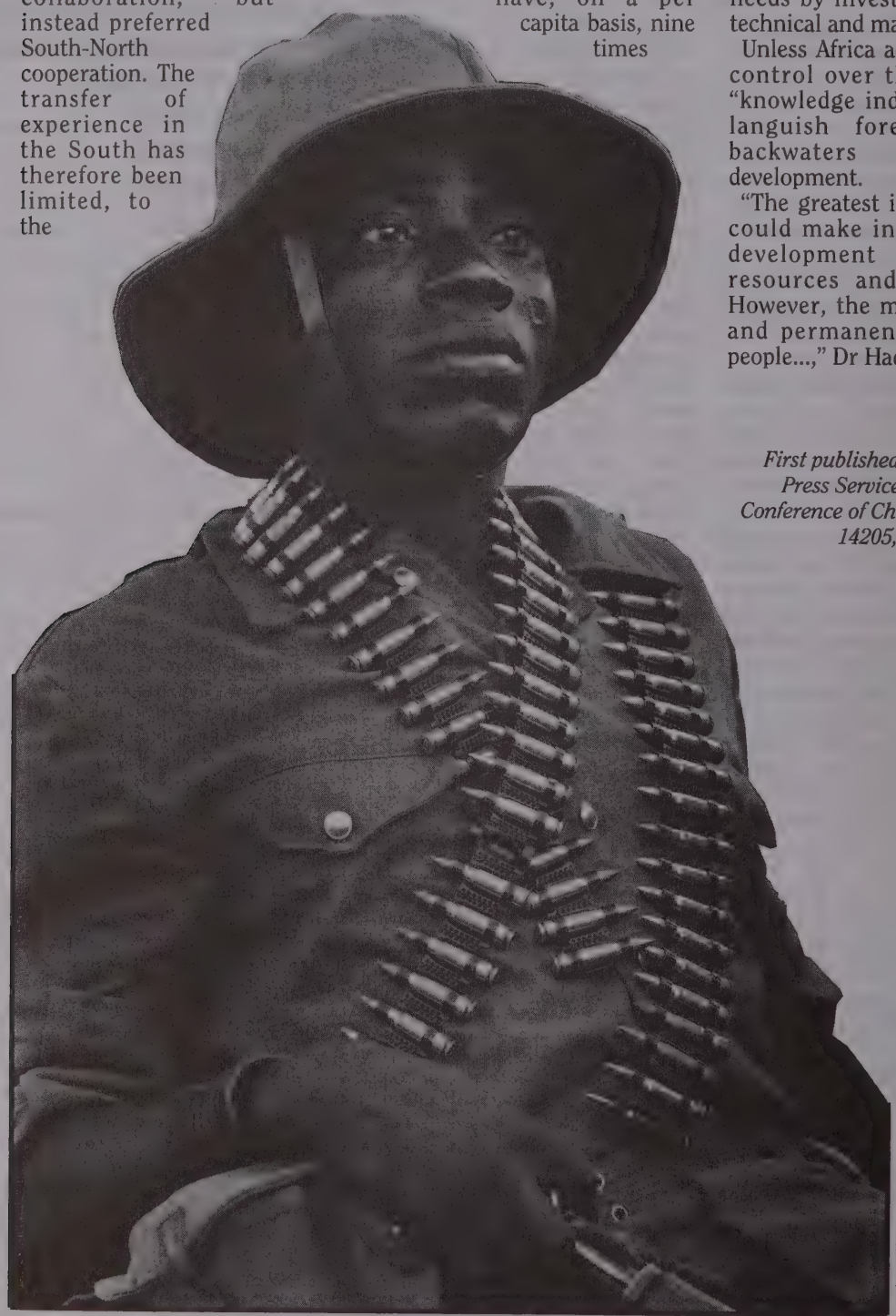
But perhaps the most damaging factor to developing countries, Africa included, is their lack of human capital, the advisor observed. The poorest countries need a broad-based system of basic health and education, while the stronger ones need higher education and technology.

Countries of the North have, on a per capita basis, nine times more scientists and technical personnel, almost five times more higher education enrolment and 24 times more investment in technological research than the South.

African countries have the obligation to spend what they have wisely to meet the essential human needs of education and health care and go beyond those basic survival needs by investing heavily in technical and managerial skills.

Unless Africa acquires greater control over the expanding "knowledge industry," it will languish forever in the backwaters of under-development.

"The greatest investment one could make in Africa is the development of human resources and technology. However, the most renewable and permanent resource is people...," Dr Haq reiterated.



wcc photo archive

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JPIC IN THE NETHERLANDS

PROCESSING FIVE YEARS

For five years the churches of the Netherlands have been working together on a conciliar process devoted to justice, peace and the integrity of creation. They saw 1987 as a kairos moment; the Gulf war, increasing poverty, frightening armaments and the unlimited devastation of the environment. "We were all very scared", they said. They believed that the Church of Jesus Christ should be recognisable by its resistance against the flagrant violations of justice, peace and integrity of creation and they set out to make it so.

It was hard work, but they kept at it. They set priorities; they tried to set the JPIC theme into liturgy, education, catechism, diaconate and missionary activities. And in 1993, the Steering group of that process looks back and asks: what were the main results? Wim van der Zee writes for ECHOES about the answers they found. He begins with a story and ends with the ten blessings gained from the process.

A TRUE STORY

It happened in a small town. Very old. Dutch in every inch. With six Christian communities. A right wing and a midway Netherlands Reformed congregation, a congregation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, a Roman Catholic and an Old Catholic parish, and also a community of the Full Gospel. They peacefully lived next to each other; having neither quarrels nor contacts. Meeting each other frequently on the streets and in the shops, but never in any church frame.

Suddenly a letter of their church leadership, bishops or synods, was dropped on the table of five of them, with an urgent call to participate in something like a conciliar process. It seemed to be important, with all those heavy words about threatening developments in our world situation. What to do with that?

At a reception two of the pastors met. They talked about the letter. Why don't we work together on that? asked one of them. Why not all together? responded the other. They decided to invite representatives of the sister churches for a meeting. Including the Full Gospel brothers and sisters. Why not?

All who were invited came to the meeting. All agreed to work together; but each doing it in their own way, was the conclusion. And, like real Dutch people, they decided to form a working group.

The working group worked indeed. Worked well. A whole programme was developed in which every community participated in its own way. After consultation of several people they agreed on a priority programme. Think globally, O.K., but we will act locally. That was what the church leadership asked for: look into your own situation where justice, peace and the integrity of creation is threatened and reflect on your own contribution to that.

The priorities should be presented on a Churches' Day.

Justice: solidarity with the group of

peter williams, wcc

refugees which was hosted in the town and confronted with much resistance. Hostility instead of hospitality.

Peace: deepening and broadening the relations with the counterpart in the then GDR. Our town is not only situated in the Netherlands, but also in Europe and in the world.

Creation: The problems of ecology and agriculture. The town is surrounded by farms, hitherto a foreign world.

The Churches' Day was not only a historical event, but also a very successful happening. Every community was responsible for the programme in its own building. Common was the responsibility for the market. The churches realised the presence in the town of organisations which were also engaged in the fight for a better world: Amnesty International, the Red Cross, a Third World shop, the peace movement, an environment group and so on and so forth. They all got the opportunity to present themselves at the market: a first form of cooperation between the churches and those organisations.

The lord mayor and representatives of the Community Council were interested and attended. One of the aldermen was given the chance to explain and defend his hospitable refugees' policy which had been disputed among the inhabitants.

The Churches' Day started in the big Reformed Church and finished in the Roman Catholic Church. Many people, for the first time in their lives had a look in another church.

In the meantime many links were made. Between the churches themselves; between the churches and other movements and organisations; between the church and the local politicians; between faith and the actual problems; between faithful reflection and social action.

Afterwards people said: we easily found each other on the conciliar process: why not in other areas? Formation of a council of churches is perhaps a bridge too far. But we can found an ecumenical working group. And so they did, not ceasing to be Dutch.

That, in a nutshell, is a picture of the conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenanting) to justice, peace and the integrity of creation. On mini scale. A true story indeed.

Wim van der Zee is General Secretary in the National Council of Churches in the Netherlands.

TEN BLESSINGS

And so the Steering Group made up the bill after five years. We did process. Did we proceed?
The Steering Group counted its blessings. And again made ten points. What were the main results?

1. A clear understanding that the major world problems, impoverishment, armament and environment devastation, are interconnected and only in their interconnectedness can be brought to a solution.

2. The recognition that reflection and action on justice, peace and the integrity of creation is not a sideline, but belongs to the very being of the churches.

3. Experiences of a possible model of conciliar deliberation throughout the whole church about questions relating to society.

4. New impulses for ecumenical cooperation, now directed to the connection between faith reflection and social engagement.

5. A programme of priorities to which representatives of the churches committed themselves, Europewide (Basel 1989), worldwide (Seoul 1990) and in own home (Utrecht) 1989).

6. The beginning of reflection and action here, in a movement worldwide, and many new contacts beyond our borders.

7. A basis in the churches for the activities of all those movements and groups which have been involved in the problems of faith and society for many years; and a place for various activities and actions to meet, complete and inspire each other.

8. A basis for contact and relations between churches and social and political organisations.

9. A new involvement of the churches in the problems of environment and new forms of cooperation with the environment movement.

10. A growing understanding that economical factors are strongly decisive for the manner in which our (world) society is distorted and that decisions of faith are at stake also regarding economical questions.

Jim Forest

In a period marked by increasing political and ethnic division in many regions, it was encouraging to be part of a border-removing event: a meeting which helped bring key areas of ecumenical closer together.
The task of the World Council of Churches consultation was to explore the relationship between work for church unity, on the one hand, and response to issues of justice, peace, and the environment on the other, and to see how these areas of ecumenical life can be brought into more fruitful interaction.

KOINONIA: SEEKING A COSTLY UNITY

"We are paying for the fact that we didn't work for unity earlier," said the Rev. Dr Lukas Vischer, professor of ecumenical theology at the University of Bern and a former director of the WCC's Faith and Order sub-unit. "Division costs lives."

"We're here to heal the divorce between the spiritual and the physical," said one participant, Dr Constance Tarasar, Unity and Relations director of the National Council of Churches-USA.

The five-day meeting at the end of February was arranged by two sections of the WCC: Unit I (Unity and Renewal), and Unit III (Justice, Peace and Creation). The meeting place was the Christian folk highschool in Rønde, near Århus, Denmark.

Taking part were 32 theologians, pastors and scholars belong to Protestant, Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches; six were WCC staff members. The countries represented included Argentina, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ghana, India, Kenya, Korea, Lesotho, the Netherlands, Romania, South Africa, Tanzania, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, the Tonga Islands, and the USA.

The consultation was co-chaired by Anna Marie Ågaard, professor at the University of Århus and a president of the World Council of Churches, and Rev. Dr José Miguez-Bonino from the Methodist Church of Argentina, a past WCC president. (Introducing himself, José pointed out that he was now retired, but preferred the Spanish word "jubilado" to describe his situation. "It means," he said, "someone whose work is jubilation.")

The conversation took shape around several question:

What is the nature of the threats facing humanity and creation? How do these threats effect our situation and life as churches? What are the "signs of the times" and how do Christians respond to them? What is the relationship between ecclesiology and ethics? How do we understand the ecclesiological issues of the JPIC process? How can koinonia *be defined from a JPIC perspective? How does* koinonia *relate to theological understandings of the whole creation? What can be clarified from the controversies which emerged in the JPIC process over the terms "covenanting" and "conciliarity"?*

Discussion was also framed by the history of the modern ecumenical movement. In the 1920s ecumenical movements emerged for both faith and order (focusing on doctrinal and theological issues dividing the churches) and for life and work (encouraging Christian cooperation in responding to social, political and economic problems). In 1937 the two movements merged to form the World Council of Churches.

"We may well be convinced that unity and moral conviction are two sides of the same coin," said the Rønde statement, *Costly Unity*, "but we have not yet given that sufficient and satisfactory expression, and further incantations about the search for unity and the search for justice as inseparable do not really help. The compelling task, then, is serious dialogue about long-lived tensions and divisions."

Participants in the consultation urged "a new official impetus to the JPIC programme as a central WCC

focus." This is needed because "the being of the church is at stake in the justice, peace, and integrity of creation process."

A key term in the discussion was *koinonia*, meaning a communion in which we share, in Jesus Christ, a common vision for a newly just, peaceful, and responsible world, despite imperfect communions and still fractures relationships....With [such a] sense of *koinonia*, there emerges the possibility of a new ecumenical beginning in which the JPIC and Faith and Order movements can share.

A key term in the discussion was koinonia, meaning a communion in which we share, in Jesus Christ, a common vision for a newly just, peaceful, and responsible world, despite imperfect communions and still fractures relationships...

"There can be no doubt that 'following Christ' means very practical things for the early Christians," the Rønde meeting declared, "matters that often brought them into tension and conflict with the surrounding world."

In relation to ethics, *koinonia* means that the Christian community "is a place where, along with the confession of faith and the celebration of the sacraments, and as an inseparable part of it, the Gospel-tradition is probed permanently for moral inspiration and insight, and where incessant moral counsel keeps the issues of humanity and world alive in the light of the Gospel. As such the community is also...a place of comfort and support. For some this might mean a consistent emphasis on non-violence; for others a permanent response to the guilt-and-forgiveness dimension of all human life; for still others an effort to recover a sense of calling and covenant in the experience of individual and social life."

Koinonia was identified as an apt term for the church's nature and JPIC process:

It is...an empirically verifiable observation that commitment to and working for particular moral causes creates community among people. The JPIC experience again and again has been that people have been gathered into a fellowship which can be described as *koinonia*. Involvement in these struggles of human community generates this *koinonia* and often enlightens doctrine. An "ecclesio-genetic" power is at work here, frequently moving participants to rich liturgical expression and raising deep religious questions for them, questions of faith and commitment. The power of the Holy Spirit is present here—this is the testimony.

Koinonia is made concrete, the Rønde meeting said, by covenant. Rejecting use of the term merely in the sense of a commitment undertaken between human beings, the Rønde meeting stated:

We intend the word here...in its full biblical meaning as a relationship initiated by God: a promise to which God is faithful despite all his peoples' failures and transgressions. Thus a covenant between human beings carries the biblical sense only if it made before God with the intention of obedience to God's covenantal requirements. To enter into this covenant means we accept the conditions under which God sets us in the midst of creation.

The meeting urged the WCC to study the ways different traditions express their approaches to ethical questions, through which "the meaning of such key terms as 'conciliar process', 'covenanting, and '*koinonia*' can be explored as further linkage of JPIC and the visible unity of the church."

While the life of the church rests in the grace and mercy of God, nonetheless "moral lapses on the part of the members of the church may and often do threaten the credible witness of the church." As a result "the church is called to the kind of resistance to the threats to life which JPIC sought to combat and help accomplish."

While recognizing that Christian community provides room for differences of moral judgment, the Rønde meeting rejected "wholesale moral relativism":

...It will always be the case that certain decisions and actions are in contradiction of the nature and purpose of the church and the central teaching of the gospel. Instructive past instances of this are those German Christians who uncritically pledged allegiance to the Nazi State, and those South African churches which supported apartheid. In both cases those concerned excluded themselves from the church of Jesus Christ. They were guilty of what Visser 't Hooft described as "moral heresy". Here the being of the church is at stake. It should be added that heavy caution is in order when the stakes of moral judgment are this high, since the boundary is one which draws the line between true and false church. What is both safe and important to say is that serious moral struggle over life issues is always required of the church by its very nature.

The Rønde meeting urged participants in the ecumenical movement to seek a "costly unity":

Cheap unity avoids morally contested issues because they would disturb the unity of the church. Costly unity is discovering the churches' unity

as a gift of pursuing justice and peace. It is often acquired at a price....Costly unity is precisely to transcend loyalty to blood and soil, nation and ethnic or class heritage in the name of the God who is one and whose creation is one. It is the unity of the church accomplished on the way of the cross, paid for by the life of Christ and the lives of the martyrs, whose witness inevitably included moral witness. This is unity which, by God's grace, breaks down dividing walls so that we might be reconciled to God and one another. JPIC as a process has often borne testimony to this costly unity. Its enemy is cheap unity—forgiveness without repentance, baptism without discipleship, life without daily dying and rising in a household of faith (the *oikos*) that is to be the visible sign of God's desire for the whole inhabited earth (the *oikoumene*).

The Rønde meeting, stressing that some moral concerns carry greater weight than others, said that at the top of the list are threats to life:

The church is now called to respond above all, as JPIC did, to threats to life as a moral imperative. Given its role as God's co-worker in the created order and as the proclaimer of the gospel of salvation, the church is bound by its nature and purpose to act decisively when life itself is threatened by whatever forces—economic, political, military and through damage to the environment. Issues of survival are the most compelling for the church.

The reality of deepening division in the world was brought home to the Rønde meeting by the experience one of the participants—Rev. Louise Tappa of the Union of Baptist Churches of Cameroon-had at the Copenhagen airport. Though Rev. Tappa had in her passport a Danish visa, the official checking the passport told her, "Why don't you return to Cameroon?" When she questioned why she was being singled out to fill out forms and answer questions, he told her, "Lady, piss off!" After a 15 or 20 minute delay, she was finally allowed to proceed to the domestic terminal where she barely caught her flight to Århus. (In a letter to the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs, participants in the Rønde meeting protested this example of "apparent racism". The incident was widely reported in the Danish press.)

The Rønde meeting recognized the "ten affirmations" of JPIC's Seoul convocation in 1990 as "a moral centre around which we can all gather" and suggested developing the affirmations into "a kind of ecumenical catechism".

The Rønde meeting looked for ways in which the World Council of Churches could move in a less bureaucratic direction with the goal of "integrating previously separated emphases in WCC work" in order to develop "a more conciliar style of working in and among the various

edwin hassink, wcc

offices of the WCC."

This will require, the meeting stressed, "cultivating the art of listening". Those taking part in dialogue "have to translate into their own vocabulary terms that others use rather than attempt to impose their own vocabulary. Similarly we need a basic respect for different starting points—the activist, the academic, the ecclesiastical, for instance."

The meeting urged the WCC to "make an explicit effort to protect and develop such ecumenical memory by consciously creating and sustaining a 'community of elders' in the ecumenical movement."

Concern was expressed "that sometimes people are invited to participate in the work of the WCC who have no previous experience except perhaps the attendance at one Assembly." While acknowledging the need to organize the ecumenical debate "in ways which enable full participation and exchange between a range of views," there is the danger that "legalistic application of the quota system" is self-defeating and narrows rather than ensures constructive exchange. "We suggest...that the principle of the quota system be used with more freedom."

"Probably the most important achievement of the Rønde meeting," said Prof. Anna Marie Ågaard, professor at the University of Århus and a President of the World Council of Churches, "was simply bringing together leaders associated with the various traditions within the WCC and seeing that they have a common hope that areas of work that in the past have been isolated from each other might be brought much closer together. On the one hand we had people coming from that part of the ecumenical movement whose main focus has been to work theologically for the unity of the church, and on the other hand people engaged with the churches' response to the world around us. After six days of intense conversation, it is clear we see ourselves involved in concerns that are two sides of the same coin."

"From the beginning the WCC has been challenging churches to move ahead, pulling, pushing, inspiring and supporting movements that have radicalized some issues," said the other co-moderator, Rev. Dr José Miguez-Bonino from the Methodist Church of Argentina, a past president of the World Council. "This means there is bound to be tension. The question is how to make tension creative instead of frustrating. I think we did a good job in Rønde in relating the quest for unity and social witness. It was open and non-defensive. Both the 'Faith and Order people' and the 'JPIC people' were listening to each other and helping each other, not just defending their own turf. My only worry is that the document we've produced will 'get lost'—become located so far down the agenda that no one ever gets to it. But what I am hoping is that it is the beginning of a process of serious consultation and that local constituencies will get drawn in. Then something important will begin to happen."

"On the one hand we find people in the church unity movement who look at JPIC activists and say 'they're people for whom faith is secondary—they ought to be in the UN'," said Prof. Paul Crow of the Council on Christian Unity of the Disciples of Christ Church and editor of the ecumenical journal, *Mid-Stream*. "Then we've got those who dismiss the efforts of 'the faith and order types'. I am more shocked by how ecumenists fight each other than I am about any group of politicians. It doesn't matter that we disagree, even passionately, but why the hostility? Happily there was practically none of that hostility at the Rønde. This gives me hope that the ecumenical movement is experiencing renewal. We've always got to remember that division in the church contributes to the division of the human community. A divided church blesses a divided world."

"The issues discussed here are central to Christian life and witness," said Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, an executive secretary of Unit III and one of the meeting's organizers. "We know that commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ means costly involvement in the pain and brokenness of the world. And we know our faith binds us in fellowship with others across boundaries of confession, tradition and geography. But we don't yet know how these two truths fit together. They should come together in church life but it often doesn't happen. It's now 10 years since the JPIC process was launched, and 30 years since the last world conference on Faith and Order. My hope is that what happened at Rønde will help us recover the oneness of Christian community and engagement in the world."

Jim Forest participated in the Rønde meeting on behalf of the Orthodox Peace fellowship. A former general secretary of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, he now directs Peace Media Service in the Netherlands.

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Resources

VIDEO

To Be A Woman is the title of a video produced by Visafric Productions for the All Africa Conference of Churches. It is a valuable resource for educators and groups interested in learning more about the effects of structural adjustment programmes on the lives of women and children in Africa. The introduction of structural adjustment programmes meant to change the lives of people in Third World countries has become a global concern. The video underlines the human dimension of economic policies, as it depicts the lives of women in Ghana, Uganda and Zambia struggling for social and economic survival.

Available in PAL or NTSC from All Africa Conference of Churches Women's Desk, P.O Box 14205, Westland, Nairobi, Kenya, or Mr Ghedeon Musa, Visafric Productions, 297 St Clair Ave. East, Toronto, ON, Canada M4T IP3.

VIDEO

Professor Chung Hyun Kyung shocked many delegates during a presentation at the World Council of Churches 1991 Assembly by invoking the spirits of victims of tragic death. Her image of the Holy spirit, Chung said, derives form "my gut feeling deep in my people's collective unconsciousness". The video ***Gentle but Radical*** follows Chung as she mediates with a Buddhist monk, teaches feminist theology, watches Shamanist and Confucian rites, visits a poor family, talks about the mother of whose existence she learned only as an adult, and worships with other women.

Available from WCC, Visual Arts Section, P.O. Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland. Price SFr 39.50 or US$ 29.50 plus mailing (Europe SFr. 15; Switzerland SFr. 5; Overseas SFr. 19 or US$ 13.50).

UNIT III NEW PUBLICATIONS

I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT

1993 marks the mid-point of the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-1998). The mid-Decade worship resource material is now available. ***I Will Pour Out My Spirit,*** is the title of the booklet which contains a liturgy for use during the period from Easter to Pentecost 1993, when churches are asked to give renewed attention to the Ecumenical Decade. English, French, German and Spanish, in one volumne.

Available from WCC Publications. Price SFr. 5; US$ 3.50; £ 2.25. 20% discount 10 copies or more.

RESTORE OUR STOLEN VOTE !

Report of an Ecumenical Mission to Haiti sponsored by the WCC and the Caribbean Conference of Churches in late November 1992.

Available in French and English from Unit III Publications.

A CALL FOR A NEW COMMUNITY

Racism and Ethnic Violence in the Countries around the Baltic Sea: A Call for a New Community.
The International Affairs Committee of the Diocese of Lund, Sweden, and the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism met together from 9-12 October 1992 to focus on the theme Racism and Ethnic Conflicts in the Countries around the Baltic Sea: A Call for a New Community. The first ecumenical consultation of its kind, grouping together representatives of countries linked by a sea.

The report is available in English and German from Unit III Publications.

COSTLY UNITY

Costly Unity, reports on the meeting on Koinonia and Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC). See the story on page 39.

Available in English, German, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Korean and Indonesian from Unit III Publications.

Resources

DIRECTORY OF INTERNATIONALISM

As a first step towards joined international action against the uprising racism (Rostock!) and the advancing nationalism ('Yugoslavia'), UNITED for Intercultural Action, a Network against nationalism, racism, fascism and in support of migrants and refugees has published a Directory of Internationalism. This brochure, containing the addresses of all major organisations active in those working areas, aims to establish cross contacts and a better information-flow on both internationl and national level in order to organise common anti-racist campaigns in the nearest future.
UNITED is completely run by voluntary workers and needs financial help: You can support UNITED by ordering thi useful Directory through sending DM 10 (or equivalent in other convertible currency) to:
UNITED for Intercultural Action, Postbus 413, NL 1000 AK Amsterdam.

Women and World Development Series

ZED Books and the UN/NGO Group on Women and Development

The Women and World Development Series is the outcome of more than a decade of research on world development issues and their impact on women. The Series makes the work of some ninety representatives of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations, administered by the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service, available to everyone interested in national and international questions of social and economic justice, and in the improvement of development programmes and policies.

The books suggest ways in which action can be taken to bring women's concerns more directly and effectively int the development process, and to bring about an improvement in women's status in our rapidly changing world.

All books in the Series are available free of charge to developing countries through the ***United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service, United Nations, 1211 Geneva Switzerland****. Launched in Spring 1991, the Series now plans to publish a total of 10 volumes by the end of 1993.*
Address: ZED Books Ltd, 57 Caledonian Road, London N1 9BU, UK. Fax: 071-833 3960

New Gestures, New Gazes - A guide for reading and celebrating the Gospel of Luke. The particular narrative of the Gospel of Luke, read in a celebrative way, seems to call for the reinvention of reality: we find gestures, sounds, words and silences with the shape of the Sacred and a profound appeal: conversion!
Human dignity. Justice. Respect for differences. Solidarity. Freedom. Service. Sharing. Protecting the life of the weakest... These aren't just ideas, concepts, subject to be taught, discussed, assimilated and reproduced. They are practical attitudes and liturgy is a fertile arena in which to experience them.

Published in Spanish, Portuguese and English, by Instituto de Estudos da Religi~ao, Ladeira da Glória, 98, Glória, CEP 22211-120 - Rio de Janeiro, RJ - Brasil - Fax: (55.21) 205 47 96.

Forests are not forever**: a resource handbook on the environment** attempts to develop an appreciation of the earth and its resources. It examines the current state and the extent of human destruction of the world's forests. A joint publication of the Centre of Concern and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, the handbook takes the perspective of the forests and their dwellers. While not pretending to provide all the answers to environmental questions, this handbook, the first in a series of handbooks on the environment, facilitates our understanding of and commitment to protect and defend the rights of the earth. By Ms Edna J. Orteza.

United Church in the Philippines*, 877 Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, West Triangle, Quezon City*
Telephone 924-0207 / 924-0215 / 924-0219 - Telefax (632) 924-0207 or from
Center of Concern*, 3700 13th Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017*
Telephone (202) 635-2757 - Telefax (202) 832-9494

FILM ON WAR IN ANGOLA

As you all know there is a terrible war going on in Angola. In most western countries there is little press coverage about this war.
John Liebenberg's documentation shows the horrors and destruction of the war, especially the crimes by UNITA. Moreover there is some information on mercenaries hired by the western oil companies. A major of the 32nd battalion explains how his group was hired by the Angolan State oil company *Sonangol*. An Angolan-American boy explains how his family was slaughtered by UNITA. Much destruction, many dead bodies in the streets.
Since there is little TV coverage of the Angolan war and the suffering of the Angolan people it seems useful to inform TV in your country.

Contact the Dutch TV, Mr Philip Tammer, tel (0) 35-772 883.